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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES
IN THE CHIPEWYAN COMMUNITY
OF COLD LAKE, ALBERTA

by



JOSE HERNAN ARIZA

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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ABSTRACT

Canada enjoys the luxury of being one of the most highly developed nations in the world. However, in Canada there exists a minority group, our native population, whose living standards do not compare with those of the majority of the Canadian population. Through this study, the author attempts to examine the discrepancy between these diverse standards of living and to make recommendations for ways of narrowing the gap that prevails between the Indian and the non-Indian.

The Cold Lake Indian Reserve in Alberta is the focal point of this study. Its present social, economic and religious orders are reviewed. This Reserve is a homogeneous community of Indian people and, therefore, the same principles should be able to be applied to other Indian communities in Canada.

The author was a Community Development worker on the Cold Lake Reserve under the Human Resources Development Authority. It was his experience that the application of the principles of Community Development can aid in reducing the persistent gap between Indians and non-Indians.

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CHAPTER I

AUTHOR'S BACKGROUND AND PARTICULAR INTERESTS IN THE "WHITE-BROWN" RELATIONSHIP

The author's country of origin is Colombia, South America, where very little racial division exists at the present time, although there are a few tribes in remote areas that are of a pure native race. The South American continent was discovered by an Italian, and was conquered by Spaniards and Portuguese who "married" the natives without much delay or a great deal of concern. Thereby, they gave origin to the South American mixture of races that today inhabits the continent.

Here in Canada, a different phenomenon occurred. It is the author's intention to study the Chipewyan tribe of the Cold Lake Reserve and its relationship with white communities, and to make some recommendations for Community Development.

The Author's Introduction to the Cold Lake Indian Reserve

The Human Resources Development Authority is an organization for which the author worked for four months in the summer of 1970. This organization did not have any contact with the community of Cold Lake, although

that part of the province was assigned to the northeast area under the direction of the Community Development Officer located in St. Paul, Alberta.

Alone, and not knowing anyone, the author drove to the Reserve on the first day of work. His intentions were to go to any house to speak to anyone and to introduce himself as a Community Development student from the University of Alberta who would be at the Reserve from mid-May to the end of August.

The author approached the first house selected at random. There were some children playing in front of the house, but when they saw him stop, they quickly went indoors. When he knocked and asked for their father, they told him he was at the reserve hall at a meeting. The meeting was for the nomination of a new chief and new band councillors for the next two years.

After receiving directions to the hall, the author went there directly. He felt then that if he could have the opportunity to speak to the group and explain who he was and what he was doing, it would be an important advantage. He found the hall and a few people gathered outside. Inside he found a man sweeping the floor. The author offered to help. They began a conversation about the meeting. It would be that afternoon sometime, the man said, and, after talking for a while, he asked the author home for lunch. They would return later for the meeting. Among other things for lunch they had bannock,

which the author preferred to ordinary bread.

When they returned to the hall, the meeting was in session with eighty to one hundred people in attendance. At the front table sat the acting chief, Mr. Ralph Blackman; the Resource and Development Officer from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Mr. Max Halber; the translator, Mr. Victor Matchatis; and two other councillors, Mrs. Melanie Matchatis and Mr. Lazare Janvier.

During the recess the author introduced himself to Mr. Halber who was surprised at the author's presence and wondered who had told him about the meeting. As they conversed, they learned that they both spoke Spanish. It is always nice to speak to someone in one's own language. The author was then introduced to Mr. Victor Matchatis who, in the following session, introduced him to the group in the Chipewyan language.

The author had the opportunity to speak to the group and the interpreter translated for those who did not understand English. The main "message" was that he would endeavor to work with them for the betterment of the community. That day several people invited the author to visit them in their homes in the near future.

Following the nomination meeting, the author spoke to some of the young people about a variety of subjects. Being aware that there were no sports activities going on, except bingo on occasional Sundays, the

group began to discuss the possibility of the foundation of a sports club. This idea later materialized.

The author was surprised at the manner in which the community accepted him. Perhaps his brown skin, brown eyes, and Spanish accent helped him to relate to the Indian community. "Are you an Indian?" many people would ask him. He did not have any definite answer to the question. Depending on the situation or on the person who asked the question, he gave answers and explanations.

A week later the election of chief and councillors was held. Those elected were: Chief of the reserve, Mr. Ralph Blackman; Councillors, Mr. Ernest Ennow, Mr. Harry Marshall, Mr. Dominic Piche, Mr. Francis Scanie and Mr. Lazare Janvier.

Methods of Collecting Information

The author used several methods of collecting information:

A. Historical records--The author referred extensively to books which make reference to the community of Cold Lake specifically, and to Canadian Indians, in general. Some of these books contained the results of anthropological studies dedicated in particular to the Chipewyan tribe. The records of the Roman Catholic Church in Le Goff, one section of the Reserve, were also kindly offered for the author's observation.

B. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development--The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, located in St. Paul, seventy-five miles southwest of Cold Lake, represents the Federal Government in all matters related to the Chipewyans of Cold Lake. No written information was provided by that office. However, an oral overall view of the history and relationship of the Chipewyans to Cold Lake was given.

C. Personal experience--The author lived in the community or close to it while working as a Community Development assistant for four months in 1970. He returned in 1971 for a month, working specifically on this thesis.

D. Ten families for the study example--Ten families were selected by the author in order to present a concrete and specific study of the political, economic and social order. These ten families, the author believes, are representative of the total Reserve population in terms of the problems they experience.

E. Other sources--A number of newspaper articles, relating in one way or another to the Chipewyan community, were examined. A number of interviews were also held with knowledgeable people on and outside the Reserve. The interview approach varied from a few questions and answers to open-ended conversations. No predetermined list of questions was asked each respondent. However, the author

recorded the conversations as he deemed them necessary to the understanding of life on the Reserve.

Delineation of the Problem

The Cold Lake Reserve is inhabited by approximately 900 Indian people belonging mostly to the Chipewyan tribe. They are geographically segregated from the white community, although on some occasions, there is interchange with the white community in social and economic activities.

The Reserve community is not self-sufficient: lack of jobs is apparent; the unemployment rate is high; agricultural production is low. No business of considerable importance exists; no industry has developed to the extent that it could offer permanent employment to members of the Reserve. Consequently, social assistance is high.

There exists a great deal of dissatisfaction with the educational system. The drop-out rate is very high and no vocational training has been available to the members of this community. The state of the Reserve is the basic reason for the standard of living gap which separates the "Browns" from the "Whites".

The central issue in this thesis is to consider how the native people can move from this serious state of deprivation to a more independent, equal place in Canadian society.

In order to analyze change strategies such as Community Development, it is necessary to understand both the historic situation of the Indians as well as their present circumstances. Chapter II discusses the general history of Indians in Canada, while Chapter III focuses on the Chipewyan people as a distinct Indian group. Chapters IV and V present the author's description of the Cold Lake Reserve as he found it. Topics covered include health, education, religion, housing, water supply, transportation and recreation. These chapters attempt to indicate Reserve problems as well as economic and social resources available.

Having described the historic and one present situation of the Indian people, the thesis analyzes the Community Development approach as a potential change strategy. Chapter VI focuses on the actual application of Community Development principles in a number of Reserve development projects. These projects are personal examples of how change was brought about on the Reserve, and they serve as positive sign posts for the future.

Chapter VII presents the author's summary of his study and field work. It also presents his conclusions regarding the applicability of Community Development to Indian social and economic problems.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE CANADIAN INDIAN

The current situation of the native people can be understood only if one takes into consideration the struggle of the past. In this chapter the author puts emphasis on Canadian history.

Many geological changes took place in the Canadian territory long before men overcame the hostility of the land. The Canadian Indians have the distinction of being the first who could live and reproduce on the North American continent. However, since the discovery of this side of the world by the European people, many changes have taken place--man-made changes, changes for prosperity and also for destruction. Some of the dominant changes were caused by the discovery of a demand in Europe for certain basic materials such as fish, timber, and fur. These three staples in particular attracted businessmen from the world over.

Although the white man's arrival gave the native a view of the "outside world", it was also the origin of the natives' disturbance. Approximately four centuries after the discovery of the continent and the ambivalent Indian-white relationship, the European government pro-

posed a treaty in which the Indian would receive "security of income" and would remain living on reserves.

The Indians of the Cold Lake Reserve, as representatives of Canadian Indians in general, are in a dilemma between two worlds--their very own world and the world of the white man. There is no easy solution to this matter. The author considers it pertinent to introduce Community Development as one of the possible ways of creating a better life for and a better relationship among the people belonging to the Canadian ethnic mosaic.

Geological Changes

Among the amazing geological happenings in this part of the world, one of the most dramatic changes was the natural transformation of a glacial stage to a land suitable for bush, pasture, and later, for fantastic agricultural production. According to geologists, the Glacial Age occurred between 65,000 and 20,000 years ago.¹ During that time the glaciers advanced across what are now the three prairie provinces--Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. One of the glaciers advanced from the direction of Hudson Bay and another came from the west.² These glaciers met in the vicinity of Edmonton. The meeting line is shown by the different varieties of rocks carried by the glaciers and deposited in the soil of Alberta. From Vegreville to Alberta's eastern border there are

tracks left by the glaciers in a series of ridges and moraines, all pointing southeast, the streams running in that direction also.³

The theory of the process of change is explained in the following manner:

*Forty thousand years ago the ice along the meeting line began melting and breaking up, so that about 20,000 years ago a corridor became free of ice. By that time also the ice was melting back along its southern edge to a line somewhere north of the Saskatchewan River. The ice-free corridor extended up the Mackenzie River Valley into Alberta and continued south along the east side of the Rocky Mountains. In Alberta the corridor was open from the foothills to a point a few miles north-east of Edmonton.*⁴

Along with the geological changes many species began to develop to the point where they became useful for the survival of man.

The Arrival of the American Indians

The American Indians arrived in this new setting and inhabited it for more than ten thousand years. Where they came from is still a matter of debate, but anthropologists generally agree that they are of Asiatic origin.⁵ From Asia they probably entered this land through Alaska and began the long, slow trek that eventually took them to the southernmost tip of South America. The route that was free of ice first and was thus habitable was the

inland route via the Yukon River and out to the east side of the mountains by way of the Peace River. Most likely they came in successive "waves of migration" and not necessarily all from the same area since they had tribal differences.⁶ It is of interest to note that the Yukon, that part of the continent which the European explorers saw last, was the first to be known by the Indian explorers.

It is reasonable to assume that the primary concern of these migrants was a plentiful supply of food, which by that time was in abundance. In the interior, where the cold was more intense, caribou and moose were the basic sources of food and the hides were used for clothing, roof covering, and bedding.

This long migration into North America was destined to take hundreds of years. The Indians had a fear of the unknown and did not travel for mere pleasure. They were swift and sure travellers when passing from one place to another in their own hunting areas.⁷ Hunger or the pressure of other tribes forced them on to new areas. These pressures forced them little by little to the tip of Asia and finally across to Alaska and down into Canada. After their long journey in the wilderness, beset by hunger and cold from Siberia, this land, especially that along the Saskatchewan River, was a good land. Here the Indians found that they were, as were the rabbits, the buffalo, or the pigeons, a part of nature. Living things

around them were brothers; all things were children of the Great Spirit. This relationship was to be broken when other adventurers, the European explorers, with other incentives, arrived on the scene.

The Arrival of the Europeans

Upon their arrival in the Bahamas and Cuba in October, 1492, Christopher Columbus and his crew were the first to see and marvel at the "New World".⁸ Five years later, a place where fish abounded was discovered close to Newfoundland by John Cabot.⁹ Both Cabot and Columbus were looking for a short sea route from Europe to the Far East.

When the Europeans landed in Canada they found the Indians with a degree of civilization, a sense of sympathy and helpfulness, a religion, and a moral code. Peter Pond, one of the first traders who came up the Athabasca River, gave testimony to the importance of honesty to the Indians. The returns of the first trading season had been beyond expectation so that he could not take all the fur with him on his return to headquarters. He made a cache and left there the remaining furs; the cache was open to inspection of the Indians. When he returned the next fall, the cache and its contents were still there and would have remained there indefinitely because the Indians' code did not allow them to take what was not theirs.¹⁰

The social life of the Indians was based on clans which extended beyond villages and even tribes. They were ruled by chiefs of the various clans, resulting in rivalry for supremacy in the respective villages. While hunting and fishing occupied the summer season, the winters found them gathered together in their villages feasting, dancing, and celebrating rites in connection with numerous secret societies. The Indians had no fermented drink, and the winter parties were free from drunkenness.¹¹

The "Triangle Trade"

Fishermen from several European nations were attracted to the "place where fish abounded". Trade was established between the West Indies, Europe and North America and there began an era of mercantilism. A fantastic "triangle trade" was established. In Newfoundland, fish were caught and dried. They were loaded on ships and taken to the West Indies where they were sold. From there, four principal staples--wine, sugar, molasses, and cotton--were taken to Europe. Fish were also taken to Europe, where they were in demand at that time.

Fur Trade

One of the staples that fully involved the Indians in trade was fur. In the latter part of the 18th Century and the early 19th Century, Europe, especially France and Britain, demanded great quantities of furs.

In this era, felt hats made from beaver pelts were popular and a symbol of wealth and rank. So the season for fur trade opened. As a result the Indians established interaction with the white man. They traded furs for items they had never seen before; this was an exciting new era for them.

France was the first nation to enter the North American fur trade. There was in North America a need for goods such as guns, gun powder, blankets, kettles, knives, paint, and so on. In return for these, the traders received furs: muskrat, otter, marten, mink, bear, fox, wolf, lynx, buffalo, and above all, beaver (which amounted to two-thirds of the total value of the fur trade).

Because of the abundance of furs, the Hudson Bay and the North West trading companies were founded. The latter was the largest commercial enterprise in North America.

The North West Company developed a complex and efficient organization for getting trade goods to the outlying posts and furs to Montreal. The point of contact between Montreal and the North West was Grand Portage.¹²

The Hudson Bay Company obtained a licence which granted exclusive rights to trade in the Pacific slope and also in the North West Territories, which was named "Indian Country".

For trading much use was made of the canoe because it was faster and surer than ships, but an inter-

esting problem presented itself--one-third of the canoe had to be filled with food for the traders. Thus the traders adopted the Indians' food, pemmican, which was ground dried meat mixed with an equal amount of melted fat and mixed with berries and sometimes herbs to add flavour. In this way they not only had more space but carried a good protein supply for the trip.

The Cold Lake area is not mentioned as an important center of fur trade but, nevertheless, it was taking part in general. As Mr. MacGregor says in his book: *"Two free men arrived from Cold Lake on the north side of Beaver River. They brought a few furs and some of the large trout which in the lake abounds."*¹³

Primary Results of the Fur Trade

By trapping and killing off the wild life too rapidly, the Indians' supply was destroyed, and they were put entirely at the white man's mercy. Confusion and anxiety began. This misfortune dramatically changed their way of life and the process of adaptation to other ways of life created difficulties in their struggle for survival. They became like strangers in their own land.

The Chipewyans and their Relationship to the Eskimo and Cree

The original center of the Chipewyan native distribution was in the Peace River area. The movements

and wandering that have since taken place were closely connected with the westward advance of the Cree at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries. The Chipewyan settlements that now inhabit the northwest began after they successfully repelled the Cree from the Peace River country.¹⁴

It is likely that the Cold Lake Chipewyan community occupied the farthest territory to the southeast, establishing the boundaries between the Chipewyan and the Cree territorial dominions. It appears that on the north side, in about the middle of the 18th Century, the Chipewyan and Eskimo fought over possession of the Barren Ground Territory. The Eskimo, who usually lost because they did not yet own fire-arms, were gradually driven northwards.¹⁵

This situation was not permanent however. Eventually the Chipewyans were pressured by the Eskimos to move from the tree line. Possibly because of the cessation of pressure from the Cree in the south, the Eskimo once again took over some of the Barren Ground Territory. Today the Chipewyan seldom penetrate north of the tree line except for brief hunting and trapping excursions.

Smallpox Epidemic

In 1781, a severe smallpox epidemic killed a great number of Chipewyan people. According to Hearne's

description,¹⁶ 90 per cent of the total population died. Petitat, another trader dealing with the Chipewyan, told that there had been 900 Chipewyans trading into Fort Chipewyan in 1862, but, in 1879, there were only 537.¹⁷

There is no doubt that the epidemic considerably diminished the Indians' population. By 1870, Father Lacombe had a mission in St. Paul, fifty miles from Cold Lake. He witnessed the smallpox tragedy that overtook his little mission. He described the situation as follows:

It ravaged the Saskatchewan Valley that summer and fall killing thousands. The greatest heroism was displayed by the Hudson Bay Company and by the missionaries. Each helped all he could with no thought of himself, ministering to the sick and burying the dead. The poor Indians, in their hour of need, congregated at the mission in spite of advice given them to disperse. Innumerable were the calamities; camps were wiped out and whole villages disappeared. Everywhere there was utmost suffering. At Moose Lake, near Bonnyville (13 miles from the Cold Lake Reserve), a whole camp of Indians died. Later, when a traveller passed that way, a horrible spectacle of empty teepees and unburied dead met his eye.¹⁸

In spite of this serious tragedy among the Chipewyans, some managed to survive. Nature permitted them to reproduce again, to reconstruct the ruins of the past. It was like a new day after a dark, lonely and mysterious night.

The Signing of the Treaty with the Government

The winds still blew across the Prairie, sun shone, the grasses grew and the river ran strong. But the buffalo was going; the time had come when the great tribes of the upper Saskatchewan must treaty with the white men. Already their brother chiefs on the lower river had marked the X that gave them \$25 for each chief, \$15 for each head man, and \$5 for every ordinary man, woman, or child. Each year they were to receive the same amount of money with the promise of tools and farm equipment if they decide to take up agriculture A square of land would be received for each family of five . . . and they will receive \$12 per person if the treaty is signed.¹⁹

What they were releasing was all claim to the land. It is impossible to fully understand the situation when the natives had to sign the treaty accepting the white man's proposal. They had been under much pressure from many sources, but the most painful was the pressure of hunger and the fear of starvation.

In 1876, Big Bear was invited to Fort Carlton, as were all the other chiefs of the region--Sweet Grass, Pound Maker, Red Pheasant, Mistawasi, Strike-Him-on-the-Back, Thunderchild, and others. The purpose of the meeting was the signing of the treaty. The officials of the "Great White Mother" were there; the governor was in his colorful uniform and flanked by his official party. The preliminary ceremonies were made--the Peace Pipe, that symbol upon which no woman must look at the time of the ceremony, was pointed to the north and south, to the east and west. Proudly, the leading chief presented the pipe

stem to the governor who solemnly smoked it. The Indians were satisfied that the proper friendship had been shown.

They gave three cheers, "white man fashion", for the Queen, for the Governor, and for the police. Since then the Chipewyan community has belonged to Treaty Number Six with all its benefits, for as "long as grass grows and water runs".

Louis Riel and the North West Rebellion

During the treaty making, there was a movement against it. Louis Riel, whose theme was "*liberty and free trade*,"²⁰ could visualize the future and the implications of signing treaties. He led in a vigorous fight for Indian liberty and for the freedom of the country; he was perhaps the figure who gave the natives hope. Hundreds of people followed him in solidarity to the high ideal of freedom.

Riel, accompanied by his followers, had ridden out to meet the surveyors of Canada, placed his foot on the chain and ordered them to go no further Riel was a hero."²¹

But all the efforts to stop the treaty-making process were in vain. The battle was unequal and the rebels were far from reaching total victory. The rebels were in recess and they then decided to retreat, though not for long.

In 1884, Riel started an open rebellion against

the government again. This time he received the support of Big Bear, the chief of the Frog Lake Reserve, and his men from the north. They were very unhappy with the situation that involved all the native people of the northwest after the signing of the treaty. There were no buffalo to be hunted; the police distributed only the food they could spare. The government began to question the treaty clause requiring them to feed the natives in time of scarcity. "If they continually made distributions it might set up a precedent which might turn into a habit." Tension was mounting among the Indians and the non-Indians.

The Frog Lake Massacre

On the Frog Lake Reserve a tragedy was to occur involving Little Poplar, Wandering Spirit, and Pound Maker, all of whom held important positions in that community. The time had come for the government to pay the 1885 annuity to the Indians in that area.

William B. Cameron, a nearby resident and worker at the Hudson Bay Company at that time, describes the place and the incidents:

Frog Lake, a simmering expanse of blue water, lies ten miles north of the North Saskatchewan River with which it is connected by a creek bearing the same name, in what is now the province of Alberta There were the buildings of the Government Indian Agency, the Hudson Bay Company trading post, the Roman Catholic Mission, and the store of a "free" trader named Dil.²²

At the arrival of one of the government officials, Little Poplar asked him who he was, to which he answered:

*'I am an officer of the Great White Mother, and I come from the Pile of Bones (Regina). Each year I go around all the reserves to see how fast the Indians are learning the white man's road, how to make things grow on the land so that they soon will have plenty to eat. They should of course also get help when they are sick or in need; flour "kookoosh". I look into these things. I am an inspector.'*²³

The Indian, on the contrary, had not learned the "white man's road". They were hungry and some of them were sick. With memories of the abundance of the past, Little Poplar came to Trumman Quinn, a government official, and said: *"My people are hungry and would like to eat fresh meat again. Will you kill an ox before the treaty money is paid?"*²⁴ Quinn shook his head: *"The government gives cattle to the Indians for work and milk but not to kill. There is no beef for you."*²⁵ This question was asked three times and the answer was always no. Apparently that was the spark that started the fire. For two days the band danced the war dance. A tragedy was to begin, nothing could stop the Indians now. The sentence was for all white men including missionaries; several people were massacred.

At the same time, the Riel Rebellion was coming to an end. Louis Riel was arrested at Fort Pitt, tried in Regina, and hanged there on November 16, 1885. At Frog Lake, Pound Maker and Big Bear were arrested and

sentenced to short terms of imprisonment in Regina. They did not live long after their release. Eight other Indians, condemned for murder at Frog Lake and other places, were sentenced to be hanged at Battleford on November 27, 1885.²⁶

It is uncertain whether the Chipewyans of Cold Lake were involved in the Frog Lake Massacre or not. Mr. Cameron, talking of the general attitude of the Chipewyans, said:

*Still farther to the north lay the territory of yet another race of fur hunters and trappers, the Chipewyan. These Indians, while like the Apache of the widely distributed Athabasca stock, had none of the aggressive characteristics of that formidable tribe; they were timid people who would do anything but fight and they were in subjection to the Cree.*²⁷

Since the end of the North West Rebellion and for approximately the last eighty years not much change has taken place among the Chipewyans of Cold Lake. Apparently they have been accepting the way of life left for them under the influence of the Government and the Catholic Church.

Summary

When the North American territory became habitable, the Indian people arrived and, through a slow process of adaptation to the climate and environment, wandered from region to region. However, they became self-sufficient in

their setting and in their own way of life.

Then the Europeans became aware of this new land. With their arrival, mercantilism began with staples found in the recently discovered territory; fish, timber, and fur were the most important in this trade. Fur directly involved the Indian people. This direct contact with the Europeans encouraged in the Indians a new outlook on life, a desire for European goods, and assimilation of part of the European way of life.

The Chipewyans were one of the smallest tribes among these groups of people. They came in contact with the white man, whether he was a trader, a civil servant, a priest or a nun.

Uncertainty engulfed the Indian people. Game became scarce. The people became more dependent on donations from the white man and dissatisfaction created a struggle between them. Louis Riel became a leader who demanded independence from the English Crown. A struggle for survival continued and eventually led to the Frog Lake Massacre in 1885 when several white men were executed as a result of the desperate situation in which the natives found themselves.

Footnotes

¹J. G. MacGregor, *Blankets and Beads, History of the Saskatchewan River* (Edmonton: The Institute of Applied Art, Ltd., 1949, p. 26.

²*Ibid.*

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁶L. R. Geddes, *The Skeena, River of Destiny* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1957), p. 5.

⁷MacGregor, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

⁸Although the Vikings in 1000 reported seeing an unknown land.

⁹W. T. Easterbrook and Hugh G. J. Aitken, *Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada, 1967), p. 23.

¹⁰MacGregor, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

¹¹Geddes, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹²Walter Sheppe, editor, *First Man West: Alexander Mackenzie's Journal of his Voyage to the Pacific Coast of Canada in 1793* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1962), p. 15.

¹³MacGregor, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

¹⁴James W. VanStone, *The Changing Culture of the Snowdrift Chipewyan*, National Museum of Canada, Bul. No. 209, Anthropological Series 74, (Ottawa: Roger Duhamel, F.R.S.C., Queens Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1965), p. 6.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 36.

¹⁶W. B. Cameron, *Blood Red the Sun* (Calgary: Kenway Publishing Co., 1926), p. 7.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 8.

¹⁸MacGragor, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

¹⁹M. W. Campbell, *The Saskatchewan* (New York: Rinehart, C.C.O. Inc., 1950), p. 198.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 190.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²Cameron, *op. cit.*, p. ii.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶MacGregor, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

²⁷Cameron, *op. cit.*, p. ii.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY AND ETHNOLOGY OF THE CHIPEWYAN PEOPLE

The majority of the residents of the Cold Lake Reserve belong to the Chipewyan tribe, although there has been intermarrying with the Crees, particularly with those from the Frog Lake Reserve. The Chipewyan people are predominantly tall and thin, with bodies which appear well coordinated and athletic. They have long, oval-shaped faces, wide foreheads, small brown eyes, straight noses, medium sized mouths, thin lips, pronounced chins, and straight black hair.

Clothing and Dwellings

In the past there was heavy dependence on skins for clothing and bedding. It required from ten to twelve caribou skins to make a complete outfit for one hunter alone, i.e., his clothes and bed while on a hunt. Skins were also used for the aboriginal Chipewyan dwelling, the teepee, a conical frame of poles covered with skins. The cover consisted of several pieces, each of which was made up of about five large caribou skins. At the top there was an opening for the smoke from the fire which burned on the floor in the middle of the teepee. This

opening was covered with a separate hood rather than by the two fixed flaps common among the Plains Indians.

This type of dwelling, so admirably suited for a wandering people like the Chipewyans, seems to have disappeared by the early 1900's. It is noticeable that:

Of the 50 Indian dwellings at Fort Chipewyan when Seton visited there in 1907, only two had caribou skin covers. The rest had covers of cotton muslin. Cotton covering was popular because they did not require continual watching to protect them from dogs. Many lodges, however, had caribou skin hoods since they were less likely to burn than those made from cotton.¹

A family, including possibly aunts and uncles, lived in a single dwelling and the number might increase when one member "married".

Marriages

When they reached the age of 15 or 16, men in the Chipewyan tribe began to think of marriage. Usually their female partners were 13 or 14 years old. Religion or ritualism of any kind was not involved in a marriage celebration. It was, however, one of the most exciting times in the life of a tribesman. An important tradition was preserved in this regard: a young Indian attracted to a young maiden would watch her tent until he discovered the location of her sleeping robe. Then when night came he would creep into the tent and spend

the night beside her, slipping out quietly before dawn. If the attraction proved to be mutual, gifts were exchanged and he either went to live in her tent or she in his.²

Men did not put any particular value on the necessity of virginity in their prospective wives. Divorce or separation was common among the Chipewyan, so much so, in fact, that until the first child was born, the marriage was mostly looked upon as a trial one. Permanent separation could be caused by unfaithfulness on the part of the wife or by her failure to carry out her duties satisfactorily. She was simply turned out and told to return to her family.³

For men, the privilege of having a woman was related to the ability to hunt. Only the best hunters were able to maintain more than one wife; consequently, polygamy was more the exception than the rule. It was also customary to wrestle for wives. A weak man, unless he was a good hunter, would not be allowed to keep his wife if a strong man won her.⁴

The Role of Man and Woman

In hunting--Men were the hunters, and their skill was respected and admired by the women, but men could not take complete credit for their success or failure as hunters. Women were faithful companions. According to the

Indian way, every expedition had to have women along as an indispensable requirement; otherwise it was possible to end in failure. Besides the symbolic functions of the Indian woman, there were other practical reasons for taking women along.

When all the men are heavy laden they can neither hunt nor travel for any considerable distance; and in case they meet with success in hunting, who is to carry the produce of their labor? Women! She was made for labor, one of them can carry, or haul as much as two men, they also pitch our tents, make and mend our clothing, keep us warm at night, and in fact, there is no such thing as travelling any considerable distance, or for any length of time in this country without their assistance The very licking of their fingers in scarce times is sufficient for their subsistence.⁵

Pregnancy-- A pregnant woman did not take special precautions. She continued her usual work until the time that labor began. However, she avoided carrying or lifting heavy loads during the last weeks of pregnancy.

The traditional position for delivery was for the expectant mother to lay on her stomach with her knees slightly bent while another woman assisted by drawing a caribou skin tightly about the lower part of the body.⁶

Births--Births were taken very much for granted and there was a minimum of disturbance in a family's pattern of life with the arrival of a new child, who was specially welcome if it was a boy. If the delivery was normal and the mother was in good health, she was usually up within two days after the child was born and started her duties again. The baby was breast fed from

two to four years, depending on the mother's next pregnancy.

Names--Names were always given to children by their parents or near kin. Boys' names were generally derived from some place, season, or animal.⁷ Apparently the aboriginal Chipewyan name was not given at birth, but at the time when the child first began to make the effects of his personality felt. The name would reflect some aspects of his personality and later on in life he might receive nicknames for similar reasons. This practice remains in the Cold Lake community today; there are individuals who are known only by their nickname and very limited use is made of their proper name.

The first missionaries who came into the area gave the people "Christian" names only, and these were usually French names, just as they are today. The use of family names on a large scale seems to have begun with the first treaties; contact with the government made it necessary for various members of the family to be readily identifiable for maintaining band lists and other government records.

Attitudes Towards Old Age and Death

Old Age--Chipewyan men age very late in terms of appearance, and they remain active until an advanced age (about fifty-five years old). Old age was a difficult

time for the Chipewyan in days past because when they became too old to work, they were treated with disrespect; abandonment of the aged was practiced. It was not unusual to find an old man or woman living alone in a single teepee with no protection from the community.⁸

Death--A rather specific form of behavior was present among the Chipewyan at the loss of their relatives. It seemed that no article of the dead person was spared by these unhappy men when a near relative died. *"Their clothes and tents were cut to pieces, their guns were broken, and every weapon was rendered useless."*⁹ Death was a time for display of feelings. The aboriginal Chipewyans never buried their dead but wrapped them in skins and left them where they would presumably be eaten by wild animals and birds. It seems that for this reason, people would never eat foxes, wolves, or other scavengers unless absolutely necessary.¹⁰

Changing Culture

Most aspects of the Chipewyan material culture have either radically changed or disappeared throughout the more than 200 years of European contact. Perhaps most of the change is to be seen in their clothing. In fact, it is nearly impossible to reconstruct any aspect of aboriginal clothing on the basis of vestiges that may remain among the people of the community of Cold Lake.

However, the desire to work and process hides remains in a few homes today. The women do marvellous work, spending much time on beading. The color combinations and the variety of designs done with beads is amazing. The length of time which this work takes and the fact that there is not enough market for the products may be the reasons why the Chipewyans do not process leather crafts on a large scale. Consequently, each item becomes very expensive, and it is a luxury to wear any of the real Indian vestments.

Leisure Time

The Chipewyans of the past and the present do not differ very much from other tribes in Canada, particularly in their social life. They enjoy visiting, taking part in conversation, playing games, and having tea dances outdoors. The traditional musical instrument is the drum which is made of a wooden frame covered with caribou skins. The drums are hit with two short taps followed by a pause. The sound of the drums is frequently accompanied by singing a wordless chant to an almost monotone melody. Each dance, which is performed in a circle, lasts about fifteen to twenty minutes, and the dance consists of moving the feet fairly slowly and smoothly following the beat of the drums. There are several melodies and several types of dances.

It is interesting to note that the Cold Lake community no longer considers the drum a musical instrument of importance. Rather, violins and guitars are replacing the traditional drums as instruments used to accompany dancers. However, during "treaty days" (the anniversary of the signing of a treaty with the government), they invite performances by drum players, singers, and pow wow dancers from the nearby Cree community at Frog Lake.

The Cree have preserved their social traditions more closely. They display leather outfits decorated with ornaments of various sizes made from a variety of colored feathers and beads. After a few dances by the Cree, the Chipewyans, mostly in their everyday clothing, join in the dancing circle to the special enjoyment of the older folks.

The author asked why they do not use these types of ornaments in festivities, and a Chipewyan said, *"The Cree had the buffalo, and lots of time to do these things. We had to spend all the time hunting smaller game."* The continuous hunting and fishing occupies most of the Chipewyans' time. Their first necessity, survival, has not been overcome.

Religion

In dealing with the religious matter, we should consider the Christian religion, the Chipewyan religion,

the combination of both, the complete replacement of the Chipewyan religion, and the loss of religious sensitivity of the Chipewyan. One of the distinctions of mankind from the rest of the animal kingdom appears to be a sensitivity to spiritual things. The uncertainty of the future and the daily anxiety to know the unknown make people speculate and the Chipewyans, of course, are no different. According to Sir J. G. Frazer, religion is "*a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man, which are believed to direct and control the course of human life.*"¹¹

Christianity, which is a combination of Judaism and the philosophy of Jesus Christ, accepted the Jewish theories on human creation. For Canadian Indians the concept and the process of development in religious matters has been quite different from the Jewish religion in its detail but not in principle. Even if there appears to be some difference in rituals and beliefs among the different Indian tribes, all agree to the existence of a major spiritual being who created everything and who rules the known and the unknown. They refer to this being as the "*Great Spirit*", "*Kitse Manito*", "*Orenda*", or "*Wakanda*".¹²

Some of the Chipewyan communities in the northern part of the country still have some remnants of primitive religion in their explanation of the creation of man. David Thompson, in a general reference to the Chipewyan, made the following observation:

*Some of them have an ancient tradition that a Great Spirit descended on a rock, took a dog, tore it into small pieces and scattered them. These pieces became a man and a woman, and this man and woman are the original parents from whom they all come; and thus the dog is their common origin; on this account they have very few dogs; frequently several tents have not a dog among them.*¹³

The concept of eternal life also played a part in their religion. In this respect, Campbell said:

*. . . Yet that is what happened not far from the handsome, modern Hudson Bay Company store in Edmonton. Dog teams race over the glittering snow of the winter and lonely trappers remember the old Chipewyan legend as they bend back their heads to see the zenith of the northern lights, the legend that sees in the twinkling stars the souls of the departed.*¹⁴

However, in their practical way, the main purpose of life was survival and reproduction of the species; their outlook was directed toward these two principles. So for them it was unreasonable to think that strict monogamy, as Christianity required, would be the way by which to live. They concluded that a:

*. . . hunter or warrior with two or more wives and their children was well off. Other hunters and warriors envied him and even made off with an especially useful wife. Wives hewed, carried, and made clothes and pemmican and shelters. Many sons were potential hunters and warriors; daughters might bring good sons-in-law to the band.*¹⁵

Just as religion played no part in marriage celebrations, neither did it in separations. It was also natural that "if a man tired of a wife or wanted to get rid of her for some reason, it was good sense to do so."¹⁶ A dra-

matic change awaited them in the acceptance of the new religion which permitted a man only one wife to whom he was united by ceremony and to whom he was to remain faithful *"until death do us part"*.

The native religion very often played a part in the political and social organization of a community, and frequently the chief was in charge of the ritual celebrations. For some communities one of the indispensable rituals was the "Peace Pipe Ceremony". This celebration was an act of searching for the will of the Great Spirit in the election and ordination of chiefs. This ceremony was also celebrated for making important decisions, and was often used in war times.

Mr. Cameron, witness of the Frog Lake Massacre, describes a Peace Pipe Ceremony celebrated in the most dramatic time in the life of the Frog Lake community. Big Bear, chief at that time, had started by saying:

"This pipe is very dear to me. It was smoked by all my wives in turn, one by one they have gone to the sand hills and this is all I have to remember them by." Taking the stem between his lips, Big Bear applied the light handed to him by Wandering Spirit, the war chief, to the bowl. He took a long pull and tightly closing his lips so that none of the smoke would escape, turned the stem in succession to the four cardinal points of the compass then toward the ground. Finally, bowing his head, he raised it straight up before him, so that the Great Spirit might be the first to smoke. After this he blew the first draught of smoke from his own lips, muttered a prayer and after taking a few pulls, passed it around the circle. The purpose of this ceremony is to propitiate the Kitse Manito and ask his guidance in the matter before the council.¹⁷

The religion of the native people was simple, as was their philosophy of life. They had codes and lived according to them, codes that were as respected as any other codes in the world.

By the early 1800's, the native religion was destined for death. The white man's presence was a threat not only to the material, common environment, but also to the spiritual and emotional well-being of the natives. The fur trade was the first step toward religious change. All the hustle and competition among men, tribes, and companies was a hardship and quickly degenerated the Indian values:

The Hudson Bay Company, while not greatly interested in religious activities, gave a helping hand to all denominations as far as it could provide the missionaries with free transportation and interpreters, provisions and a house within one of its forts, all free of charge. Its only stipulation was that religion was one thing and fur trade was another, and woe betide any missionary who tried to combine the two.¹⁸

It did not take long. Many churches were interested in the new country, particularly in the "souls" of the newly discovered people. Many young men volunteered to come and preach their beliefs. Some of these men were: Father MacDougall, Mr. Nesbit, Fathers Leduc, Legal and Vegreville, Dr. McQueen, Father LeGoff (on the Cold Lake Reserve), and many others.¹⁹

Almost all the missionaries who came to the west were fresh from the seminaries. They came with the

idea that the "Indians were poor souls who must be converted". To understand the Christian religion is almost impossible. In the process of understanding, it is necessary to rationalize, but in dogmas, sacraments, traditions, and the like there must not be any rationalization or change. So it was not surprising that the Indians did not understand. As was said,

In too many cases his conception of Christianity was that he must eat with a fork, abstain from labor on Sunday, and array his squaw in a print dress.²⁰

And:

. . . the white religion was a religion of concern with the hereafter; the Indian way was more concerned with the practical everyday interplay of action between man and his familiar spirits. Slowly the Indian found the new faith perverting his ancient beliefs from a religion of action in everyday life to a religion of thou-shalt-nots.²¹

The presence of different sects and churches increased the problem for the native people. Each ran down the other, preached a different brand of religion. For the Indians it was not normal. Many Indians commented that they would retain their one religion until the missionaries harmonized theirs a little more.²²

Mr. Grant MacEwan made an interesting comment about this problem:

The religion of this man seemed quite satisfactory until an Anglican missionary told him that he would burn forever if he did not accept the new creed. Hoping to escape the fires of hell, the Indian embraced the Anglican Church faith; but before long he was persuaded by a priest that his chances in the next world would be much better if he joined the

*Roman Catholic Church. He came under the influence of a Methodist missionary and again changed churches. After serious thought the man finally went back to his native religion saying that in it he could do his own thinking and grow closer to the Great Spirit.*²³

Today in the Cold Lake community the Chipewyan religion has been lost. Its restoration is almost impossible. According to the records, the Roman Catholic Church began its work in this community around 1878. The first baptism was celebrated by Father Emille Petitot on December 25, 1879.²⁴

Since that time many priests have preached there, and many changes have taken place in the spiritual emotions and ideas of the people of the community. When the present priest in charge was interviewed he said: "*There is nothing of the Chipewyan religion that I can think of.*" Then he added: "*Our own approach destroyed the native people.*"

It is likely that the Roman Catholic Church rejected any ritual that would interfere with the conception of Catholic ideology and acceptance of the dogmas of the Church. This is one of the reasons why nothing of the Chipewyan religion can be found today. As elsewhere, the attendance at the church is poor. The only time when it is good is at Christmas and at Easter. It is admitted by the Church leader that the Church is not responding to the needs of the community. The Indian people are in the process of finding themselves, and the Church is one of the things that they are throwing out. However, the

priest is optimistic about the future, and he thinks that the Church will again "pick up".

Views About Religion at Present

Some of the responses from the people in the community to questions related to religion are: *"Religion is a big headache. It is too complicated." The priest says one thing and does another.* About the recent changes in the liturgy they say: *"These have been changes for the worse; the changes come too fast." "It is not like it used to be. I liked it better when the priest faced the wall, now there is no solemnity." "I don't like it when we understand what the priest is saying. It sounds like everyone makes their own arrangement. It was so nice when it was in Latin."* Another person commented: *"The priest should not leave the wine in the back of the altar in the church because anyone can enter when he has a hangover and have a 'shot'."*

The concept of heaven or hell does not make sense to some. *"We have our hell here; we have to suffer for many things. Do we have to face another?"* Others say: *"I was a believer but I cannot believe any more, and I may as well be honest with it."* There are also many who will not commit themselves. They say: *"It's O.K. I guess."*

On witnessing the burial of a nine-year-old boy who was shot accidentally, the following impression was gathered. At the cemetery, across a gravel road from the church, some forty people were gathered around the newly dug grave. The priest stood by the coffin praying

while two men started wrapping ropes around the coffin in order to lower it into the grave. They were so busy that they did not pay attention to the priest in his liturgy. As soon as these two were ready they started to lower the coffin. The irritated priest interrupted his prayers to say in a louder voice: *"Men, not yet. There is no hurry. Wait until I finish!"* Then he continued praying.

After he finished his prayers, the coffin was lowered. Some men started to cover the grave while men, women, and children in a quick movement took handfuls of dirt and dropped it on the coffin. Three or four people sang the *"Ave Maria"* and two other hymns. The atmosphere was sad, of course, but there was a sense of tranquility. Even the parents of the deceased were calm. It was like the acceptance of a higher determination, that of the "Great Spirit".

Apparently what is left for the Chipewyan community in terms of religion is confusion. The majority of the people between the ages of 20 and 35 years attended residential schools where "Grey Sisters" were their teachers. Some of the informants have great resentment of the attitude of the sisters and priests and also their language and religion. The ten-month absence from their homes at an early age disturbed not only their life at that time but also their future family relationships.

Harold Cardinal discusses the religious subject in the residential schools:

Residential school was no bed of sweet balsam for the young Indian student. Often as early as the age of five, he was yanked forcibly from his parent's arms and taken scores of miles away to the residential school where a system of harsh discipline combined with an utterly foreign environment quite literally left him in a state of shock. No effort was made to ease his introduction. He was jerked out of his bed at six o'clock in the morning, made to kneel at the side of his bed to thank God, presumably for letting him sleep until six, marched army-fashion to communal washrooms, then to a chapel for morning prayers, back to a school dining hall where he had to listen to interminable Latin or English graces before he could touch the rapidly cooling gruel on the slab table before him. Then it was back to his room for half an hour. He hadn't been allowed to speak once up to now, and all too soon he had to march to a cold, cheerless classroom where the day started with still more prayers. So it went, daylong and day after day--march to lunch, march to play periods of half an hour each afternoon, march to bed by eight o'clock.

The children were not allowed to speak in their language. Their teachers, unlike the early missionaries, made no attempt to understand the native tongue. They couldn't even be bothered to learn the children's names and gave them instead easier-to-pronounce Christian names.²⁵

It is likely that most children, once they left school, did not want to continue with the practice of Christianity. Rather, they wanted a rest from Christian obligations. Consequently, the psychological attitude of the majority was negative toward the Catholic Church.

Summary

Like many other Canadian Indian tribes the

Chipewyan were nomadic hunters. Their main food was meat and their shelter was mainly a portable teepee. They relied on animal skins, especially caribou, for clothing. Their married life started when an unceremonial compromise took place, and a man and woman accepted mutual responsibilities and the sharing of daily life. Men were the hunters but the women were indispensable on hunting trips. Women were symbols of good luck; they were good companions and good bearers of burdens.

Chipewyan names were representation of animals and birds. A person got his name when he showed certain animal- or bird-like aptitudes.

Old age for the Chipewyan was the most difficult period of life. The elderly were almost forgotten and treated with disrespect. Religion was a very important matter for them. Their religion does not differ in principal from the Christian religion, but with the fur trade came the missionaries and the beginning of a philosophical struggle for the Indian people. What to believe, the reason for that belief, how to look at the northern lights without thinking about the relatives who had passed away--all these confusions were inevitable and still remain today.

Almost everything has changed for them. The influence of the white man has radically changed their way of life, but they are Chipewyans and have a profound desire to remain Chipewyans.

Footnotes

¹James VanStone, *The Changing Culture of the Snow-drift Chipewyan*, National Museum of Canada, Bul. 209, Anthropological Series 74 (Ottawa: Roger Duhamel, F.R.S.C., Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1965), p. 45.

²M. W. Campbell, *The Saskatchewan* (New York: Rinehart, C.C.O. Inc., 1950), p. 195.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁵Van Stone, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 50.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 67.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, quoted in "Religion: A Primitive Religion," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1960 ed., Vol. XIX (Toronto: Encyclopediā Britannica Inc., Wm. Benton, pub. 1960), p. 103.

¹²Harold Cardinal, *The Unjust Society, The Tragedy of Canada's Indians* (Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig Ltd., 1969), p. 81.

¹³VanStone, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

¹⁴Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 205.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷W. B. Cameron, *Blood Red the Sun* (Calgary: Kenway Pub. Co., 1926), p. 56.

¹⁸J. G. MacGregor, *Blankets and Beads* (Edmonton: Institute of Applied Arts Ltd., 1949), p. 222.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 218.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 221.

²¹Cardinal, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

²²MacGregor, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

²³Grant MacEwan, *Tatanga Mani* (Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig Ltd., 1969), p. 179.

²⁴Folio I, Roman Catholic Church Files at Le-Goff.

²⁵Cardinal, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

CHAPTER IV

PHYSICAL RESOURCES AND CONDITIONS AT COLD LAKE RESERVE

Location

The Cold Lake Indian Reserve is located at about 54° 19' latitude and 110° 17' longitude¹, and is 185 miles northeast of the city of Edmonton. According to the 1966 census, it has a population of 850 people. The Reserve is not a unit as far as the territory is concerned for it is divided into three different sections². The largest part³ lies nine miles south of the town of Grand Centre, on Highway 28. It has an area of approximately 56 square miles. This place is known by the name of LeGoff, in memory of the Reverend Pere Laurent Le Goff, who founded the mission at the Chipewyan community. About 85 percent of the Cold Lake native population lives at Le Goff.

The second largest section lies seven miles northwest of the town of Cold Lake and border the lake⁴. Twelve percent of the Reserve's population lives in this area, which is eight square miles in size.

The third portion is located east, adjacent to the town of Cold Lake, also bordering the lake⁵. It has

an area of one square mile with 3 percent of the population living there.

It is likely that the name "Cold Lake Reserve" was taken from the name of the lake which is so named because of the fact that after the winter the water temperature remains so cold that ice floats on the lake until the middle of May. The water temperature is suitable for swimming from mid-July until the end of August if the sun shines. The lake is approximately 100 square miles. According to informants, it used to be very rich in fish, and large quantities of Lake Trout were caught. Now it is not as it used to be. Nevertheless, commercial fishing is still permitted every year.

The climate follows the pattern of most of east central Alberta with the rain in the spring and snow in the winter being more intensive than in the southern part of the province.

The altitude, according to the National Topographical System, varies from 1775 feet to 1975 feet above sea level. The vegetation is composed largely of grassland which has been partially invaded by woodlands, mainly deciduous trees⁶.

It is natural that fauna respond to the environment and to food available. The most common species on the Reserve are: moose, mule deer, white tail deer, elk or Wapiti, muskrat, beaver, porcupine, hare, lynx, black bear, mink, and otter.

White fish, grayling, lake trout and northern pike inhabit the lake. Recently coho salmon were planted in Cold Lake by the Department of Fisheries with the idea of developing this type of fish in the region also.

The most common species of birds that inhabit the region for a temporary or permanent time are mallard, pintail, Canada goose, willow ptarmigan, and grouse.

Housing

The Reserve has three basic types of houses: log houses, Department of Indian Affairs housing and wood frame houses constructed by individuals. Log houses are not common now; in fact only one is being used as a home at present. The houses constructed by the Department of Indian Affairs vary from one to three bedrooms and have a living and a kitchen. These houses are built in the Reserve shop and utilize manpower from this Reserve mostly. During the spring and summer, ten to fifteen people work in the shop and three to five are employed during the winter.

This housing program by the Department of Indian Affairs has been in operation at the Reserve for two and a half years. In 1971, there were fourteen houses built for families at this Reserve and to be taken to other reserves. The cost of each home is around \$500, money which can be paid in cash, by working for the Band's programs, or by a combination of both, as the Band Council considers

it appropriate.

The selection of the applicants for a house by the Reserve Band Council is based on who is most in need of a house. One of the Council's criteria is the number in the family. Income is not considered as a standard in the decisions. There are conditions for people who buy their houses also. The "owner" is not allowed to sell his home, but can give it to a close relative if it is approved by the Council.

Perhaps kinship and nepotism can be factors when selecting candidates for a house, but a peculiar case is presented. The Chief, Mr. Blackman, does not own his house. He lives in a small house that was built for a Department of Indian Affairs agent. When, in 1965, the Department of Indian Affairs Branch was moved from Le Goff and centralized in St. Paul, this house was assigned as a temporary residence to the Blackmans. Mr. Blackman's answer to this case: *"There are many people on the reserve who need a house more than I do."*

The third type of house, the self-constructed wood frame home, varies between one and three bedrooms. In these cases, the resident buys the materials and builds the house himself or has an outside company build it for him.

In order to evaluate the current housing conditions, ten homes were randomly selected for enumeration of occupants. Seventy-nine persons, including children

under the age of twenty-one, were living in the ten homes selected.

Table 1

AVERAGE SIZE OF THE COLD LAKE RESERVE FAMILIES
IN THE STUDY SAMPLE

People per Household	Number of Households	Number of Persons
3 4	2	7
5 6	2	12
7 8	3	23
9 10	1	9
13 14	1	13
15 over	<u>1</u>	<u>15</u>
	10	79

$$79 \div 10 = 7.9$$

Table 2

NUMBER OF ROOMS IN THE SAMPLE HOUSES

	One Room	Two Rooms	Three Rooms	Total
No.	1	2	7	26
%	10	20	70	100
Average persons per room:				3.1

In order to qualitatively measure housing according to the dwellers' judgement, use was made of a numerical rating scale which was utilized by Paul F. Lazarsfeld--the Morris Method.⁷

very good		good		fair		poor		very poor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

The question asked was: "How do you consider your home: very good, good, fair, poor, or very poor?" The numerical scale was applied to the answers. It is difficult to evaluate the results of this method of ranking because of the variety of opinions possible. Nevertheless, an attempt was made to synthesize by using this numerical scale. The minimum score that can be considered a decent home was 3 to 4.

Table 3
QUALITY OF HOMES IN STUDY SAMPLE

Score		Number of Households	Percent
1	2	1	10
3	4	3	30
5	6	3	30
7	8	2	20
9	-	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>
		10	100

The scores from the Cold Lake Reserve sample show that 60 percent of the householders believed that their homes were below the desirable standard. However, a small sampling handicaps reaching a desirable precision

in the statistical results.

The recent housing program established by the Department of Indian Affairs Branch has been one of the most successful in meeting this particular problem on the Reserve. Some of the informants reported that the quality and design of the homes are improving; some are very happy with their new houses. This program has helped some families and it is likely that it will continue to do so.

Water Supply

The Cold Lake Reserve has four main sources of water supply: running water (indoor plumbing); wells, some with pumps; lake water; and dug-outs or water holes.

Table 4

SOURCE OF WATER SUPPLY OF THE STUDY SAMPLE

Source	Homes
1. Running water	1
2. A well within 50 yards of home	3
3. A well from 50 yards to a mile away	1
4. Uses creek or lake water	4
5. Uses "dug-out"	<u>1</u>
	10

Two of the families do not make use of their well because the water is unsuitable for drinking; instead they prefer to use lake or creek water.

The above data were collected from the informa-

tion given by the families sampled and through personal observations.

Communication

The Reserve does not have postal service. The mail goes to Beaver Crossing, Grand Centre, or Cold Lake. No telephone services were available, except for one at the Reserve housing shop, at the time of this research. However, it was hoped that Alberta Government Telephones would install phones in many of the homes by the end of 1971.

About 60 percent of the homes have television or radio; some have both. It appears that television and radio programs play an important part in their daily lives. The most effective community communication is by posters which announce any public meetings, particularly events that take place during the summer. "Smoke signals" are not practiced any longer, but person-to-person news, commonly termed "moccasin telegraph", is very successful on the Reserve.

Transportation

As noted, the Cold Lake Reserve is divided into three different parts, Le Goff, the largest area (149C) is fourteen miles from the lake, three miles from Beaver Crossing, and nine miles from Grand Centre. Trans-

portation to and from these places is very poor. About 60 percent of the households have motor vehicles, 10 percent have horses and a wagon, and 30 percent have no transportation whatever. It is very common to see people from the Reserve standing at the roadside asking for a ride at any time of the day. One member of the Reserve said: *"Sometimes we are lucky and get a ride right away, but sometimes we stand at the road for four or five hours and nobody gives us a ride."* Sometimes those who ask for rides are older, sometimes younger; sometimes they are women with groceries. Sometimes sick people come to the road to ask for a ride to the hospital.

One day an old woman who had cut her hand and gotten an infection in it, went to the road with her husband to hitchhike to the hospital. The day was very hot. On passing at three o'clock in the afternoon, the author picked them up and the woman said: *"We have been here since ten this morning. I could not sleep last night, my hand hurt so much."* She showed the author her blood soaked makeshift bandage. The author took them to the hospital at Cold Lake town. There is no ambulance to serve this community.

Some families, anxious to solve their transportation problem, buy old cars which they use only a short time because the cars break down. They buy parts for them, paying almost as much as the value of the car. Finally they give up buying parts and buy another car only

to continue the same vicious circle. Within a period of a year one of the households has bought four cars and still have not solved the problem. Another preferred his horses and wagon because *"even if it is slow, it never breaks down."*

Agriculture

The type of soil on which the Reserve sits, according to A.R.D.A.'s Soil Capability Classification for Agriculture rates are: Le Goff, section 149, is classified as 3T soil; section 149A is 4T; and section 149B is 4T. A.R.D.A. has six classifications of agricultural soil, with class 1 as the best soil and class 6 as the poorest:

Class 3 soils have more severe restrictions than those in class 2 and conservation practices are usually more difficult to apply and maintain. Limitations adversely affect the timing and ease of tillage, planting and harvesting, the choice of crops, the application of conservation practices, or some combination of these limitations. Class 3 crops are medium to moderately high in productivity for range crops.⁸

The largest part of the Reserve lies in the 3T classification. The major topographical problem in zones 3T and 4T is that the land is not flat, thus the slightly rolling hills require that the farmers use contour farming and other methods to prevent soil erosion. According to the informants, the land is very good for agriculture. They claim that: *"Everything grows here."*

They are pleased with the land, but the agricultural programs have not been attractive enough to capture the Indians' interest in agriculture. Using the band machinery, a very small portion, 1,000 acres, of their Reserve was planted in the 1971 crop year.

The Reserve has an agricultural program. There are three tractors as well as other machinery for the services of the community. Someone who is experienced operates the machinery, working where requested. After the harvest, 75 percent of the yield goes to the Band and 25 percent goes to the individual household. This year around 1,000 acres of wheat were planted. About 35 to 40 percent of the households were involved in this program, though they say that the yield will not be enough to live on.

The Department of Indian Affairs Branch provides small agricultural loans to members of the reserve, particularly to farmers who need money for short periods during the spring and summer months. Generally, the money is used for seed or other types of materials such as wire for fences or parts for machinery.

The Band members are also able to borrow money from the Reserve Band funds. The individual must make his request to the Band Council. If it is approved, he will receive the loan. At one meeting attended, it was reported that four Reserve members received loans of between two to seven hundred dollars. One of the require-

ments for a loan is that the Band must know the purpose of the loan. Collateral is not needed to borrow money; at least, it was not stated at this particular meeting. Bank loans, of course, are available to all Reserve members who can provide evidence of their ability to repay the loans. The most common guarantee for an Indian is to have held a steady job for a number of years, but, unfortunately, the number of Reserve people eligible is very limited.

Government Rotated Herd Program

The major desire of the Band is to raise beef cattle. *"We have pasture and enough machinery to prepare food for the cattle during the winters. We need help in order to start with 200 cattle and involve the whole community in this project,"* the chief told the author. The Rotating Herd Program is one in which the federal government gives an individual a small herd of cattle for a three-year period. At the end of the period, he can either return the cattle to the government, or he can buy the cattle outright. In either case, the individual who had the cattle for that period of time keeps title to all calves produced in that period of three years. The householder who enters this program will receive financial assistance for the first few years so that he will not be forced to sell the calves in order to feed his family, thereby destroying the goal of building herds.

However, it is not surprising that not many people can participate in this program. To receive the rotating herds the person must naturally have sufficient facilities to guarantee that the cattle will be properly cared for and will not die nor suffer illness during the three-year period. The majority of the families lack the finances to purchase the machinery and to construct the facilities necessary to properly care for cattle.

Concerning the bank relations with individuals from the Reserve, it appears more complicated for them to do business with the bank than for anyone outside the Reserve. One of the reasons lies in the Indian Act, Section 88 (1), which states that:

*The real and personal property of an Indian or a Band situated in the reserve is not subject to charge, pledge, mortgage, attachment, levy, distress, or execution in favour or at the instance of any person other than an Indian.*⁹

This has an effect too on the individual machinery dealers who appear to be reluctant to deal with the Indians on time payment plans because they would have to receive permission from the Department of Indian Affairs Branch in order to repossess the machines if need be. Another limitation is in the Indian Act, Sections 61 to 68, "Management of Indian Monies". The Band Councils are permitted to spend the Band funds only on such things as are stipulated in the Indian Act. Also, the councils are prohibited from distributing more than 50

percent of the capital monies of the Band on a per capita basis. All expenditures from Band funds must be approved by the Ottawa Office of the Department of Indian Affairs. This approval is sent to the local branch. This transaction usually takes three to four weeks; consequently, the Band council can only use its own money if the Department of Indian Affairs Branch approves of what it is doing.

Sources of Income

The source of income of the Chipewyan community used to be the trade of furs, as it was for any other Indian community. According to some of those interviewed, the best hunting, trapping, and fishing grounds were in Primrose Lake and its surrounding area. When thinking about trapping, one person said: *"It is very difficult to talk in the past tense about something that was very dear to us. It brings back great memories."* For them the continuous contact with wildlife not only was the source of survival, it was their way of life, and involved mythology, emotion, recreation, happiness, and sadness. The criterion which measured a good member of their society was the ability to hunt and the craftiness to trap.

Today those values and that freedom have ended, leaving only the memories in the minds of the older Chipewyan people. The best hunting, trapping and fishing area was closed down by the Canadian Government. This area

was selected as an air weapons range where bombers from the nearby air force base do their regular training. *"It was agreed away in 1948-49 that the Indians never again go in there with the exception of two weeks each year when the pilots have holidays. No one ever does though."* Each family received some revenue and a "welcome to the welfare table". Jobs were offered to those who wanted to work on the Cold Lake Air Base, but they had no training. They were not accustomed to being on clock time for everything. Their philosophy of life was entirely different; they worked when they felt like it; they had no time limit to go to sleep or to get up; they ate when they were hungry. Nevertheless, some of them accepted work on the Base, but, one by one, they quit.

By 1969, only two from the Le Goff community still worked there. One quit during that year because, though he had seniority and enough qualifications, he was not promoted when there was an opening. *"I will never again work for the government because they are unconcerned with the Indian people,"* he said.¹² One of his comments about the present life was: *"Today to be an Indian is mental torture."* Only one man from Le Goff works as a janitor at the Air Base now.

For a century much effort has been made to change the way of life of the "true Canadians" but with unsatisfactory results. Now the community of Cold Lake has to adjust to further fast changes. Over 800 years separate the Indian's civilization and the white man's

civilization, yet equality of performance is expected of them. Some of them have adjusted and prospered materially, even better than many white Canadians. However, this generally is not so according to the informants. For 76 percent of the total population, the source of income is social assistance, old age pensions, or disability pensions. Another 6 percent live by farming, 5 percent work outside the Reserve, 2 percent raise cattle, 2 percent have their own business on the Reserve, and 2 percent have a temporary job in the Reserve shop.

Some of the comments about getting social assistance were: *"Welfare for some is not good but they have to get it because they cannot find jobs"; "There is nothing to do. The problem increases in the winter time."* Some Reserve members leave to take training in Edmonton schools. Others go to Lethbridge during the summer months to work in the sugar beet harvest. For the past three to five years, however, just a few go there because these jobs are scarce. There, too, machinery now does the job of several men.

It is obvious that on the Reserve the surplus of labor is much greater than the demand. Apparently only about 15 to 20 percent of the total labor force has been utilized at the Reserve, making the employment situation very discouraging. With the exception of the three to five jobs in the housing shop, there is no opportunity for full time employment on the Reserve. Even the Reserve school caretaker is not a member of the Reserve.

In the vicinity of the Reserve, the employment is also very limited. The employment opportunities are so inadequate that the only way for the majority to survive is by social assistance or social allowance payments.

Under these circumstances, people get discouraged; drinking is very common. Difficulties with the police are rather frequent; court fines are high. Consequently, there is continuous suffering. Husband and wife and children all share in the unfortunate situation. It must be said, however, that the few who do have jobs are responsible workers.

Band Finances

It is obvious that the Cold Lake Reserve is not self-sufficient at the present time due to the lack of economic development.

Social assistance provided to the Cold Lake community during 1969-70 was: in the area of health, \$56,000; in the social area, \$8,599; in the economic area, \$81,311. Altogether a total of \$145,908 was provided. In 1970-71 all areas had an increase: health, \$62,893; social, \$13,021; economic \$94,364. This was a total of \$170,274.¹³

An analysis of the economic development of the Reserve in relation to ownership of, or access to, resources, ownership or access to capital or infrastructure, occupations, earnings and continuity of employment shows

that the Cold Lake Reserve was designed mainly for residential purposes. It is understood that the natives were originally not confined to the Reserve boundaries. The extensive Primrose Lake area northeast of the Reserve was part of "their" territory where they had temporary camp sites, trap lines and fishing and hunting areas. But today it appears that they are more confined to the Reserve limits.

In 1966, the Reserve's land was broken down as follows: acres per capita of improved land, 2.1; acres per capita of unimproved land, 14.2; acres per capita of woodland, 24.0. This is according to a population of 703.¹⁴

The main resources of the community of Cold Lake are the human resources--personal skills. Techniques have to be developed to effectively sell their labour in the market. Possession of land itself does not necessarily make a major contribution to the economic development of the Reserve.

There are seven main revenue-producing sources owned by or available to the natives of Cold Lake for investment in revenue-producing undertakings.

A. Band funds--Per capita income, \$165.00

B. Band revenues--Buildings, equipment and livestock, estimated value: Band-owned, \$6; individual Indians, \$123.10; Department of Indian Affairs Branch-owned, \$24.¹⁵

Of course, it is clear that Band revenues are a category of income rather than of capital; however, as a source of income over and above earnings from employment or other sources they represent a potential source of capital accumulation and economic development. Revenues have been used for such purposes as welfare (relief), repair and maintenance of social capital, and for similar purposes.

C. Band-owned equipment--There is not much investment in equipment on the Reserve. There are three tractors which are used in the agricultural program and the equipment used indoors in the housing program.

D. Individual savings--There is no way of knowing the extent of the savings individual Reserve members have in the form of bank accounts, cash, equities in insurance policies and the like. Neither is there a means of finding the sum total of their personal indebtedness to creditors of various kinds. The general impression is that the majority have very small, if any, personal savings, and some of them are continually in debt to creditors of one kind or another. There are notable exceptions to this picture--there are some families with a high average income and successful proprietors have accumulated relatively large amounts of capital which have enabled them to operate efficiently and profitably.

E. Capital aid or grants from the Department of Indian Affairs Branch--Most capital investments or grants made by the Department of Indian Affairs to the Reserve have been for social capital and public works of various kinds, rather than directly for employment and revenue-producing purposes. The internal policy has been to give higher priority to capital aid for low income families.

F. Repayable loans available from the Department of Indian Affairs Branch--The main source of capital made available to the Band by the Department of Indian Affairs for revenue-producing purposes is the "revolving fund", as laid down in section 69 (2) of the Indian Act.¹⁶ It is designed to make loans to Indians on favorable terms because of special difficulties they face in raising credit from outside sources. Such loans are limited to a maximum of \$10,000 to any individual or group, are payable within five years, and are designed to purchase movable equipment or livestock.¹⁷

G. Repayable loans or credits from other outside agencies--The major limitation for the community in utilizing the services of outside agencies is the inability of the Indians to use their land or buildings for collateral to raise mortgage capital. Restrictions on the alienation of reserve land or fixed assets makes this method difficult. This community appears to have difficulties in getting credit, large or small, from banks, finance companies,

equipment dealers and similar entities. In part, this arises from the stereotype held by "whites" that Indians are irresponsible and careless with money and equipment. Very few people have the training and the experience to deal with capital, to be involved in the complexity of modern business and to be successful.

Summary

The Cold Lake Indian Reserve is located 185 miles northeast of the city of Edmonton, Alberta. It is divided into three different sections and varies from 1775 to 1975 feet above sea level. The 850 people that inhabit the Reserve live in houses that vary in kind, size and quality. The average family size is 7.9, with the average number of persons per room being 3.1. The community is confronted with problems of water supply, adequate communication, and transportation.

Most of the land is suitable for agriculture, but there is no sizeable input. The land is also good for pasture; however, the majority of the Reserve members do not have the money required to build fences or to provide the necessities for raising cattle. Neither do they have access to banks or credit companies.

Until the late 1960's, the major source of income was from furs, but the best hunting area was selected by the government as a bombing range for the Cold Lake

Air Force Base, turning the majority of the members of the Reserve into social assistance recipients. The majority of the members of the Reserve are not skilled people; consequently, the labor force surplus is greater than the demand. Human resources are the most important. There is a need for skill training which would equip them to compete inside and outside the Reserve.

Footnotes

¹Sections 149, 149A and 149 B, map, Forest Cover Series Sheet No. 73 LB, Department of Lands and Forest, Forest Surveys Branch, 1953

²*Ibid.*, Section 149.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*, Section 149A.

⁵*Ibid.*, Section 149B.

⁶J. W. VanStone, *The Changing Culture of the Snow-drift Chipewyan*, National Museum of Canada, Bul. 209, Anthropological Series 74 (Ottawa: Roger Duhamel, F.R.S.C., Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1965), p. 6.

⁷Delbert C. Miller, *Handbook of Research Design and Social Measurement* (New York: David McKay Company Inc., 1970), p. 90.

⁸W. Odinsky, *Soil of Alberta as Established by Soil Surveys*, Research Council of Alberta, Jan., 1962.

⁹M. Newman, *Indians of Saddle Lake Reserve, Community Opportunity Assessment*, Appendix F (Edmonton: Human Resources Research and Development, Executive Council, Gov. of Alberta, 1967), p. 13.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹¹Interview with the Reserve Chief on June 29, 1971.

¹²Interview with a member of the Reserve on June 30, 1971.

¹³Cold Lake Tribal Protest, mimeographed, September 17, 1971, p. 2.

¹⁴M. A. Tremblay, F. G. Vallee, J. Ryan, "A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada," *Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies*, Vol. II, Oct. 1967, H. B. Hawthorn, ed. (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1968), p. 70.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 76.

¹⁶*Revised Statutes of Canada, 1970, Chapters 1-6, An Act Respecting Indians, proclaimed and published under the authority of Chapter 48 of the Statutes of Canada, 1964-65, Vol. IV (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), p. 31.*

¹⁷*Ibid.*, Section 70, p. 31.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Local Government at the Reserve

The internal government of the Reserve is composed of a Chief and a councillor for each 150 members of the Reserve. In the past, the community had been electing eight councillors, but in 1960, a decision was made to elect only five members to the Council. This change was made because they felt it was too difficult to reach a decision when there were too many people trying to settle the affairs of the Council. Consequently, their Council has a membership of the Chief and five Band councillors, who carry their responsibilities for a period of two years.

The Chief and councillors ordinarily meet once a month although they meet more often if need be. Their duties include: the legislation of the Reserve laws, the management of the Band's funds, the administration of Band grants to needy Reserve members, the selection of those who will drive the Band's machinery, the purchasing of the necessary implements for the Reserve, and other related duties.

There is a great respect for the Chief of the Cold Lake Reserve. He has the last word in any of the business of the Band, every negotiation goes to him for his approval. With time, some of the traditions have changed; younger men are elected as chief. The present chief is the youngest ever elected; he is in his late thirties. The general feeling of the people is that he is a good chief and is accomplishing many things for the well-being of the Band.

Relations With the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is partly in charge of the development of the Cold Lake Indian Reserve as well as of many other reserves in the country. It is sad to see that there is very little trust, if any, on the part of some of the people of the community of Cold Lake toward the Department. As one of the interviewees expressed: *"What the people of that department do is a waste of money; they do not listen to us about the problems of our community."* The Department exerts a considerable degree of authority over the community of Cold Lake, particularly with regard to economic matters. This authority tends to elicit attitudes of dependency, irresponsibility, apathy, submissiveness, and hostility from the Indians. Some of the officers of the Department of Indian Affairs in St. Paul feel that the community does not

trust them completely; however, as one officer said:

"One thing that is helpful is that this Chipewyan community is open to discussion on any matter; they let the officer know what they think. That is an advantage which is not found very often in other communities."

The Department of Indian affairs is working partly for the development of the Cold Lake Reserve. At the present time, the Band Council makes the decisions of the community. Those decisions have to be approved and fully or partially financed by the Department of Indian Affairs so the Band and the Department of Indian Affairs both participate in the decisions.

It is not the intention of this thesis to look negatively at the relationship between the Department of Indian Affairs and the community. The Indians live differently today and perhaps eat differently, although living differently is not necessarily a result of any particular development projects. There is a desire for more development. Many young people see the problem; they want to do something to help create a better life for their community. It is necessary to live there, to get to know these people, in order to appreciate them as they are--intelligent, hard workers, ambitious--but there is no program, no common channel to unify their energies and abilities for change. In general, they are not anxious to be rich but they would like to better off and live better. They can be better off as a community because they have the necessary resources.

Family Structure

There are three main types of families on the Cold Lake Reserve: the nuclear family with both parents and their children; the single parent family, composed of only one parent and the children of the household; and the elderly family, composed of one or two aged adults with or without children. Among these types, the nuclear family is the dominant one. It appears that the majority of these families are made up of couples married in the Roman Catholic Church. However, some of these are actually common-law relationships.

The elderly families are the second most dominant type, perhaps because of the Indians' tradition of "taking care of their own people". Frequently, elderly parents care for their own grandchildren as if they were their own children. They may take in their grandchildren if they were born out of wedlock to a daughter or if there is a breakup of one of the children's marriages either by death, separation or divorce. The unwed mother or the widow with her children is usually taken in by her parents who take care of them as part of the household. Common-law marriages appear to be accepted by the community as a fact of life. It is not openly condemned, neither is it condoned. Common-law marriages seem to be a continuation of value and behavior patterns of their previous way of life, but conflict with the espoused values of the present dominant society. However, common-law marital

arrangements are becoming more common in the last few years--especially in white society.

In very few cases does an elderly person live by himself. There is no doubt that the old age assistance program has strengthened the position of the aged person in the community. No longer is it considered charity to have them at a relative's home; rather, some are happy to accept their aged parent into the household.

By speaking with some of the members of the community, two main attitudes toward family size were found. The majority of the households believe that there "is always enough bannock to feed another child". Therefore, they are in favor of large families. It is likely that the fact that they are Catholics leads them to follow this philosophy of the Catholic Church which, in turn agrees with their own tradition.

A minority feel that there are some advantages in having a small family, leading them to practice birth control. It is noticeable that those with smaller families are the more educated people of the Reserve.

Results of research for this thesis found that the average family size on the Reserve was 7.9 individuals (Table 1). In the town of Cold Lake, which has a population of 1,289, the average number of persons per household is 4.1.¹ This statistic for Grand Centre (population of 1,731) is 3.7.² The Dominion Bureau of Statistics does not show what the average is for Le Goff because

Le Goff does not have a population of over 1,000.

Kinship Relations

The founders of the Reserve were not of homogeneous origin. They came from several places long before it was considered an "official" settlement in the early 1900's. Some of the settlers came from Cree communities and continue living in a mainly Chipewyan environment. Integration seems to have taken place between the Crees and Chipewyans, but it does not seem to present any sociological problems. Some of the largest families are identified by their surnames: Janvier, Mitchewais, Blackman, and Scanie.

The Role of the Husband and Wife

In the past, the 'husband' was the provider, and brought home food and clothing; thus, he was respected and his desires or opinions were of significance to the family. This role still remains in the homes where the father works and earns a living in order to support his family.

One case that illustrates this characteristic is vividly shown in a family at the Reserve. The husband and wife were both working. However, the wife terminated her work. She was enjoying her job and had a good salary. The reason for her termination was that she did not feel that a wife should work outside her home when the husband

is working. *"I wanted him to be the bread winner,"* she said.

The above-mentioned example is a general pattern on the Reserve. However, there are some exceptions. In some cases when the male does not have a job, the family's attitude towards him is different. The fact that he does not work and receives social assistance has serious implications on social relations in the family. In some cases, this lack of esteem turns the husband or the husband and wife to drinking alcohol. Consequently, the father loses his sense of responsibility and the respect of his family.

The role of the wife is generally that of a housekeeper, mother and companion to the male. Some wives spend considerable time in their gardens during the spring and summer. There is no doubt that the role of the female is also changing because of the influence of non-Indian customs.

One of the distinctive traditions of the community is to share almost anything which they have. If a hunter comes home with his hunt, many people are gathered at his house in order *"to take a piece home"*. *"I could not even taste the moose that I got. It cost me a lot of work to bring it home but everybody took a piece home!"* He showed a great deal of satisfaction.

Being a good hunter still gives an Indian some positive psychological feedback from the community. For the hunter to sit back in his home watching the people

come and go produces a feeling of pride. This sense of satisfaction is deeper than the mere idea of giving meat to members of the community. It involves ideas of belonging, of caring and of good will. Sharing is one of the traditions which presumably will remain among them for some time.

Life Expectancy

The average age of death in 1963 for Indian males was 33.31 years and for Indian females 34.71 years. However, if the deaths occurring in the first 12 months of life are excluded, the average age of death rises in the case of males to over 46 years and to just under 48 for females. The national ages of death in 1963 were 60.5 years for males and 64.1 for females.³

Some 40 percent of the families in the sample reported that from one to five children have died under the age of twelve years. It was found that the rate of children's deaths is very high. Perhaps poor living conditions, such as overcrowded homes (the average number of persons per room is 3.1--Table 2), malnutrition, and poor health habits are contributing factors. It is noticeable that the Cold Lake Indian Reserve does not differ from the other reserves in the province in these respects.

The fact that Indians appear to die most from causes which are preventable suggests that living conditions and health habits are important factors in the picture. It is perhaps reasonable to assume though difficult to establish statistically that the many Indians who do not die nevertheless are affected for the same reasons by debi-

litation and disability which in turn reduces their employability.⁴

Common Illnesses

Among the slight illnesses which are frequently found in the homes are: stomach disorders, bad colds, and sores such as ringworm. Among the more serious diseases, smallpox and tuberculosis appear to be the major illnesses which have caused most of the deaths on the Reserve in the past. Some 50 percent of the family sample report that at one time or another a family member has had tuberculosis. Some 30 percent of these families report that the only one affected was a child. About 70 percent report that two or more in the family were affected. Some of the people remember that "Asiatic flu" took many lives in the community in the late 1920's and early 1930's.

Social Implications

A number of people from the community cannot cope with the family problems they encounter. They find themselves in a competitive world for which they are not prepared. A continuous effort to go back to the happy old days is psychologically detrimental and negatively affects their development. When they find themselves in a difficult situation, the immediate reaction is to escape, sometimes by using liquor or other means which produce "trips" in order to temporarily mitigate possible hurt to themselves.

However, there is a minority group of native people of the Reserve who believe that "the future will be good for the people who go to school". School will equip them to compete and to succeed on and off the Reserve. Some of the people interviewed were members of the school board. They think positively about schooling even if their opinions differ on how it should be administered and on the criteria necessary for the teachers.

Education

Needless to say, Canadian society has developed to the point that schooling is necessary. Since the arrival of the Europeans in America, schooling has been imperative to survival in a white world.

However, the approach used at the beginning was inadequate. The gathering of Indian youngsters in residential schools was the beginning of the disruption of the Indian way of life. The majority of the natives did not comprehend why the children were taken away. Since these people had never been in contact with schools, nor with this particular method of learning, they could not see the immediate application of this learning.

The Canadian government also actively participated in the education of the native children. According to Section 113 of the Indian Act:

. . . the federal government may establish, operate and maintain schools for Indian children or enter into agreements for the education of the Indian children with provincial governments, local school boards and various churches.⁵

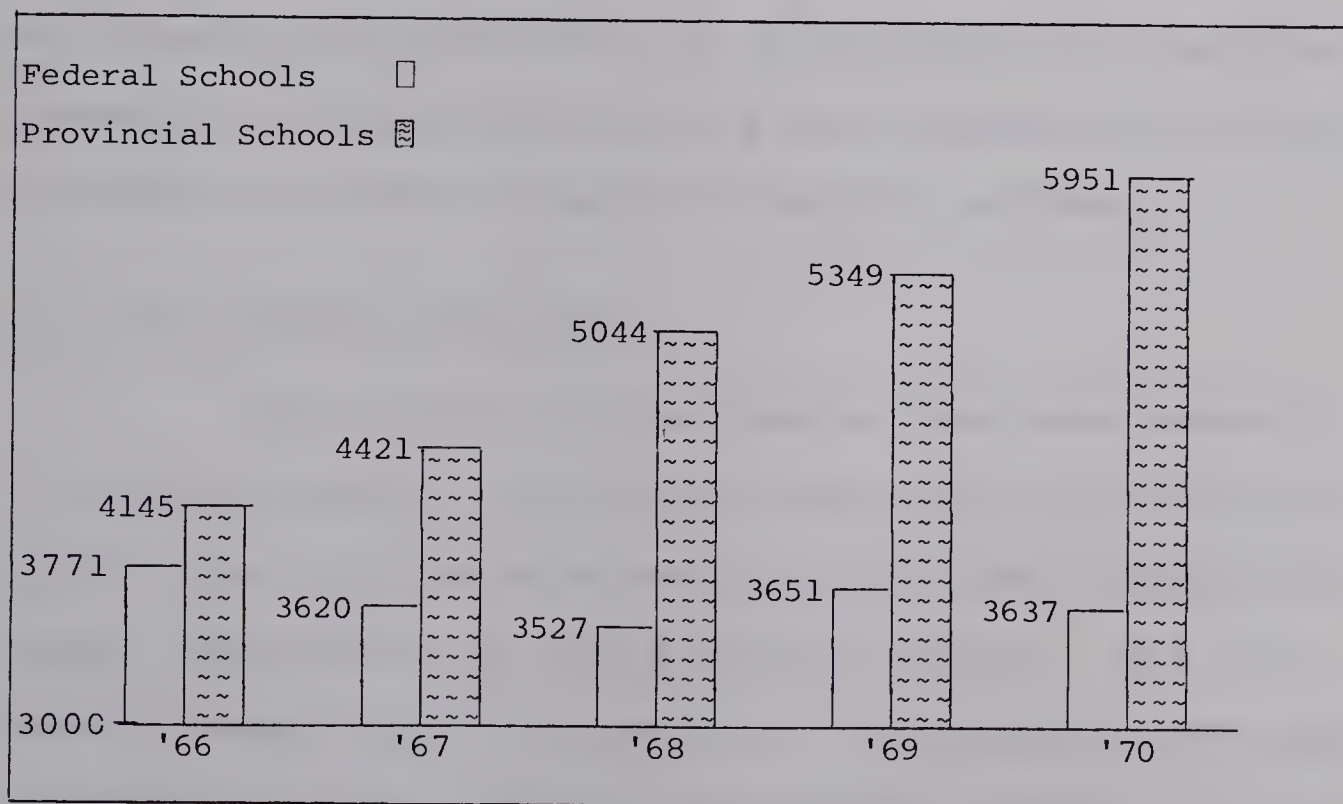
The Government stipulated that

*except in the cases where school attendance is specifically not required, all children between the ages of seven and sixteen are obligated to attend school.*⁶

Indian children began attending integrated Provincial schools as well as Federal schools for Treaty Indians. The gap between the number of Indian children attending Federal and Provincial schools increased considerably from 1966, as we can see in the following table:

Table 5

TREATY INDIANS IN FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL SCHOOLS, ALBERTA



Source: Blue Quills Native Education Council Presentation, St. Paul, Alberta, 1971. (Mimeographed release by the Indian Association of Alberta.)

The natives of the Saddle Lake/Athabasca District reacted against this increasing integration. The Cold Lake Reserve was one of the three reserves which strongly demonstrated their dissatisfaction with the school system and organized a "sit in" at the office of the Department of Indian Affairs at the Canadian National Tower in Edmonton. They stated their request as follows:

We the Treaty Indians of the Saddle Lake/Athabasca District served by Blue Quills School and Residence demand the construction of a new school from Grade One to Grade Twelve.

We the Treaty Indians demand also a school gymnasium and a Cree-Chipewyan Language tape centre, Home Economics room, shop with all required tools, for example, lathes, adult educational centre, and fully equipped library and cafeteria to serve our children.⁷

Several similar requests were presented to the government during the latter part of 1971. The requests or demands are significant not so much for their material content but because they are a public demonstration of acceptance of values belonging to another culture.

Cold Lake Schooling History

The children of the Reserve have been educated in several schools. During the late 1930's and the early 1940's, the children were sent to Onion Lake Residential School operated by the Roman Catholic Church. The children attended school for ten months and were home for the two summer months. From the early 1950's to the early 1960's, some of the children from the reserve went to

the Blue Quills Residential School in St. Paul. This school was also operated by the Catholic Church, although in 1970 the Indian people took over its administration.

About the same time, the Department of Indian Affairs built a school, which became known as the Le Goff School, on the Reserve. This school is operated by the Department of Indian Affairs, though the community selects a school committee of five members to aid in administration. The school includes Grades One through Five.

The Present Situation

Education now plays a dominant role in the community of Cold Lake. There is a unanimous concern regarding the advantage of having an education. All of the people interviewed "go for education". It was noticed that there is no pressure upon them to put their children in school, and, furthermore, some of them seem to willingly cooperate with the children throughout the school year. The following table shows the number of children from the Reserve reported in school during the 1971-72 academic year.

As we can see, the Le Goff School serves the largest percentage of pupils with the lowest number of grades. Besides the schools listed in the table, there are two public schools each in the towns of Cold Lake and Grand Centre. These are available to the Reserve community.

Table 6

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL SCHOOL ENROLMENTS
1971-72

Cold Lake Reserve Schools	P/S	Pre-1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Totals
F - Le Goff Federal Day	18	16	15	15	14	15	19								97
F - Blue Quills Residential							2								2
P - Assumption Grand Centre		3	4	4	4	1	7	6	14	7	4				50
P - St. Dominic's Cold Lake		4	9	2	2	5	3	6	12	4	7	6	2		60
P - Regional High School St. Paul									2			3	6	4	13
P - St. Paul Public Schools											1	1	1	2	2
P - Edmonton Separate Schools															5
F = Federal	18	23	28	28	20	21	31	12	28	11	12	10	9	6	229

F = Federal P = Provincial P/S = Play School Pre-1 = Kindergarten

Source: Blue Quills Native Education Council Presentation, St. Paul, Alberta, September, 1971. (Mimeo-graphed.)

Similarly, of the family sample taken, the following table shows the number of children attending school in the Cold Lake region in 1970-71.

Table 7

CHILDREN FROM THE FAMILY SAMPLE
ATTENDING SCHOOL IN 1970-71

Grades	Number of Children	Percentage
Kindergarten	2	6.9
1	4	13.9
2-3	5	17.2
4-5	5	17.2
6-7	3	10.3
8-9	3	10.3
10-11	4	13.9
12	<u>3</u>	<u>10.3</u>
	29	100.0

About 50 percent of these children attend the Le Goff School which is two old buildings, each with two classrooms and one makeshift room in the basement. There are over ninety children ranging from kindergarten to Grade Five attending this school, and, needless to say, the facilities are inadequate.

During the 1971-1972 school year, the Le Goff School staff was composed of six teachers, one of them acting as a principal, and two teachers' aides. Kindergarten is a recent program on the Reserve. The teachers' aide for this class is from the Reserve community, and, according to some informants, she has proven to be very good. The idea of having someone from the community to

help prepare the children for the following years has been successful, and there has been speculation about the characteristics that a teacher must have in order to be accepted by the children of the community.

According to Table 6, 58 percent of the Reserve children attend integrated schools. Many of these students feel that their Indian identity is not respected; very few of these students feel "at home" in these integrated schools.

An eighteen-year-old girl who studied at Le Goff School for six years and then went to a school in Cold Lake to continue her schooling said:

It was very difficult for me to adjust to an entirely new environment and at the same time keep up with my school work, but I managed to survive. Now I am finishing Grade Eleven this year (1971); my favorite subjects are Mathematics and English; I like school. I want to be an X-ray technician some day.⁸

This girl feels that there were many things against her. She often felt discriminated against, but now feels comfortable there. She likes the integration approach. She also said that changing from the Reserve's school to an "outside" school at Grade Six, as was her case, was not helpful at all; that it is much better if the children get used to the "outside world" from the first grade. Then they would not have the problem of adjusting at the most difficult time in the life of the growing child.

Discrimination in the integrated schools appears

to be a serious problem. Some of the students of the Reserve left school because they felt the teachers were too hard on them. According to some youngsters' judgement: "the teachers were unfair on many occasions."

Another problem, at times, was the language. However, this is not a serious handicap now because English is spoken in all the Reserve homes.

It is very difficult to identify the main reason for the high number of school drop-outs. Perhaps the major cause is the loss of interest in school. Most respondents stated that the children lost interest in school, did not do their homework, obtained low grades and finally dropped out of school. The school, in general, seems irrelevant to the life and way of the Cold Lake Reserve youngsters.

On the other hand, there is marked interest on the part of the parents regarding education for their children. There is recognition of the necessity of education, but the children very seldom continue to Grade 12 and university. The whole school system needs revision, not only because it is inadequate for the Indian, but because the entire situation seems ambiguous and inappropriate, and does not meet the needs of the children of the community.

Most of the population of the Reserve prefers segregation. They are aware that when some of the best students in the Reserve school were transferred to other

schools, they lost interest in doing well and eventually dropped totally out of school. The members of the Band Council comprehend the value of schooling and feel that the solution to the problem is to have a bigger school with all grades on the Reserve. Consequently, the children would not have to move until they were ready to go to university or a vocational centre. "Then they would be ready to face the world," they said.

This belief, and the overcrowded condition of the Le Goff School, led the people of the Reserve to send the following petition to Ottawa to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Mr. Jean Chretien, on May 12th, 1971:

Be it resolved that the Cold Lake Band Council demands the construction of fifteen classrooms, fifteen staff units and a gymnasium. Construction to be completed by August, 1972. We ask Ottawa officials to reply to this resolution in a definite way by June 15, 1971. Signed, the Chief and councillors.⁹

No satisfactory answer was received, and, in September, the members of this Reserve joined with the Saddle Lake and Kehewin reserves to organize a school strike. A further report about this case is included in Appendix B.

Solution

It is desirable, of course, to find an effective and lasting solution to the native education problem. Three main approaches have been used in attempting to deal

with the problem. The first of these is integration. The Department of Education of the Province of Alberta states:

As regards to education, it is the opinion of the responsible authorities in the Alberta government that the Indians must have the same opportunities as the other citizens of the province. For this reason the Department of Education has set up the Northland School district and school integration is a fact. Encouragement is also being given to greater participation by the Indians in educational matters and it has become possible for Indians to be elected school trustees even if they do not pay any real estate taxes.

The school program which the Indians follow is that of the province, except for some recent adjustments permitting the study of the Indian languages and of local history by young Indians. The purpose of this course is to broaden the knowledge of the Indian students of their own cultural traditions and to increase their pride in their origins, as well as their knowledge of their environment.¹⁰

This approach has great dignificance in theory, but in practice, it has been given little or no consideration. It is apparent that rather than there being integration, there is continuous disintegration of the Indian "cultural traditions" and there is an *a priori* underestimation by the whites of the Indian beliefs, ways, and values.

A second approach is a combination of segregation and integration. This is segregation until Grade Five, followed by integrated schooling from Grades Six to Twelve at the outside community schools. This approach has been practiced for the last two decades by the Chipewyans of this reserve. As we have seen, this arrange-

ment causes many problems for the child; consequently, it is seen by many as unsatisfactory.

A third approach is total segregation. Because of the "lack of understanding" that exists between Indian students and teachers, because of the "discrimination" exhibited in the schools of the Cold Lake Reserve area, because of the many drop-outs from schools, and because of the existence of two environments in which the children must live, the reserve inhabitants prefer segregation from kindergarten to Grade Twelve.

However, it is well known that segregation is contrary to the aims of the nation as a whole. From a broad perspective, Canada is a cosmopolitan country composed of various groups of people with their own traditions, beliefs, and values. These groups comprise a "mosaic" where each of the sections is equally important to the whole and where an interrelationship between each unit and the total and between the total and each unit exists. Therefore, it has to be said that, in this multicultural nation, there is no advantage to one section separating itself from the whole "mosaic".

The segregation of the group would have sociological effects; their conduct, their ways of thinking, and their ways of acting, as well as their social structure, functions and values may be affected. Separation may also cause social-psychological effects. A child's perception, reasoning, and concept formation are all affected by the

interplay between himself and those who surround him.

In the specific case of the Chipewyan community and its relation to the communities of Cold Lake, Grande Centre, and other towns, it can be said that separation will minimize social interaction which definitely would have a negative effect on the minority group. If one's ideas, attitudes, and habits derive from integrating the rules of others with one's own derived actions, it systematically follows that "mind itself is a social product".

It has been felt by some of the Reserve members that by being different, they are consequently inferior. In a conversation with one of the members who has a fairly good relationship within the community, he said: "... *being an Indian is mental torture.*" This cutting sentence is a product of a deep self-misevaluation; the "looking-glass self" reflected his negative view of himself as he has derived it from others. J. Piaget refers to the causes for this particular phenomenon in the following manner:

Closely linked to the interest or activity-related values are the feelings of self-evaluation: the well known "feelings of inferiority" or "feelings of superiority". All the successes and failure of the subject's own activity become registered in a kind of permanent scale of values, successes elevating his pretention and failure lowering them. With regard to his future actions as a result the individual is gradually led to evaluate himself, a factor which may have great repercussions in his whole development. In particular, certain anxieties result not from real but more often imaginary failures.¹²

It is safe to say that it is the Reserve environment, with

all its interrelated associations with the outside world, that makes him say that "being an Indian is mental torture".

Academically, segregation of schools because of race or cultural differences does not offer any advantages; segregated education is inherently inferior. The aims of education are partly to prepare a child for life in this cosmopolitan world and this preparation involves the total individual physically, emotionally, and intellectually. In this "preparation" stage, a child is living part of his life and he has the right to be happy in his present age. But how can he be happy when his superiors are ignorant of his culture and traditions; when the school does not have any relevance to home and vice versa; when the child does not know what to expect from the teachers and the teachers do not know what to expect from the child; when the curriculum is totally unfamiliar to him? How can he be happy if all that he sees and feels at school is like a nightmare, complicated, unpleasant; when the children of the majority group have learned most things except to love and understand a native classmate?

Perhaps segregation provides security for a child on the reservation. However, after leaving school, the reserve does not provide sufficient employment for the labor force that exists; their population is multiplying and there is little sign of adequate economic development. It is likely that there always will be a surplus of man-

power; consequently, they have to rely on "outside" employment. The students who would continue on to higher education have to experience total readjustment as a result of earlier segregation.

The people of the Cold Lake Reserve have accepted the concept of schooling, but have objected to the method by which this education has been given. There is no doubt that the method has to be reviewed; the principal, teachers, and teachers' aides have to be educated to comprehend and respect the values of the native culture. Modifications should be made so that the programme is suitable for the people and *not* the people for the programme. Educators need to seek participation of people from the reserve in school affairs, to evaluate and advise the student in his work and future career and to revise the curriculum in order to offer subjects that are meaningful to native children. As well, the non-native should be taught authentic Canadian history--including the story of the first people.

A solution to the problem of adult education might be vocational training which can be defined as a means of education for adults who did not finish school or for young people over sixteen who have dropped out of school. This form of education provides the student with knowledge in the industrial areas; it equips the individual with theory and practice necessary to commence employment. The courses are the basis for apprenticeship

which can be completed in four years in a combination of work and studies. Needless to say, a continuous demand for skilled personnel in business and industry exists in the present society.

Vocational training must be emphasized in this area, whether it be integrated in secondary schools or established at vocational centres where courses such as the following could be offered: up-grading for adults who left school before completing the grade required for the trade that he wishes to learn, Life Skills, Automotives, Arts and Crafts, Food Services, Drafting, Heavy Equipment Operators, Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Welding, Electrical, Building Construction and so on; in the line of business, Commercial Secretarial, Clerk Typist, Book-keeping, Small Business Management and others. These careers might generate in older students the desire to continue on at academic schools, at least long enough to complete the required grade to enter the vocational centre. The student can see the value of the hard work put into school, a goal which would be reachable in a short period of time and which would give the individual a fairly good salary. To accomplish the above, a Community Development worker would face the task of utilizing community energies and resources to reform the academic school system.

Cold Lake Reserve is ready to start something new; they are struggling for independence--physically,

economically and mentally. They do not have technical outside help, but they feel the need for a better community and want a change.

Summary

A Chief and five councillors are elected for a period of two years to form the Reserve Government. Under normal circumstances, they meet every month to discuss the Reserve's business. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is partially in charge of the development of the Cold Lake Reserve. However, there is a noticeable mutual distrust between them. But even if there is a heavy dependency on the Department, the desire for development and self-sufficiency exists among the majority of the Reserve members.

There are three main types of families in this community: the nuclear, the single parent, and the elderly. The majority are large families which, in turn, make economical development and independence more difficult.

The founders of the Reserve come from several places, including Cree communities. However, no sociological problem is apparent. There is a very marked tradition of sharing, particularly game that has been hunted. "Everybody takes a piece home," they say.

The majority of the Cold Lake members believe

that schooling is the medium by which a person improves and develops, gets better jobs, and lives better, but they disagree with the present system. Consequently, they openly oppose the continuation of the integrated school system. They want their own school buildings on the Reserve to facilitate learning, although there are people who do like the integrated schools and suggest that they are the best approach to learning.

Vocational education is essential to the Reserve in order for the Indians to develop and become self-sufficient.

Footnotes

¹Canadian Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Canada 1966*, Bulletin 2 (Ottawa: DBS, 1966), p. 4.

²*Ibid.*, p. 7.

³Indian Affairs Branch, *Statement for the Federal-Provincial Conference on Poverty* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1965), p. 46.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵M. A. Tremblay, F. G. Vallee, and J. Ryan, "A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada," *Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies*, Vol. II, October 1967, H. B. Hawthorn, ed. (Ottawa: Queen's Printer and Controller of Stationery, 1968), p. 63.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷Blue Quills Native Education Council Presentation, St. Paul, Alberta, September, 1971. (Mimeographed.)

⁸Interview with a Grade Eleven student on June 19, 1971.

⁹Telegram to Jean Chretien, May 12, 1971.

¹⁰Tremblay *et al*, *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44.

¹¹Jean Piaget, *Six Psychological Studies* (New York: Random House Inc., 1967), p. 35.

CHAPTER VI

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AMONG THE CHIPEWYANS OF COLD LAKE

Community Development Concept

Man is a social animal who gathers together for companionship and common survival. This, of course, is the nucleus of a community--the utilization of the services of its members for common growth, and the use of this growth for the benefit of its members. Today we continue the same pattern, although with great disparity. Some communities have developed physically and economically so much that the traditional sense of duty towards its members, and vice versa, has gradually been lost.

Community Development is the vanguard in the search for a community where the sense of belonging is apparent. There is a variety of concepts in Community Development, just as there is in any other field of the Arts and Sciences. "Development" is a difficult term to deal with because its meaning may be personal, it may vary according to each circumstance, each group, or each society.

Definitions of Community Development

Many definitions for Community Development have been written. All could be legitimate because of the multiplicity of ideas that originate from the concept of Community Development as "Process" and as "Program".

As Process:

Community Development is an educational-motivational process designed to create conditions favorable to economic and social change, if possible on the initiative of the community, but if this initiative is not forthcoming spontaneously, then techniques for arousing and stimulating it in order to secure fullest participation of the community must be utilized.¹

As Program:

Community Development is the utilization under one co-ordinated program of approaches and techniques which rely on local communities as units of action to purposefully change living conditions by making use of all available resources.²

It is the author's belief that Community Development is simply co-operation of community members for mutual well-being. It must be clear that Community Development is not the same as Community Services (hospitals, churches, schools, universities, libraries, and the like), although a Community Development worker must encourage the establishment and use of these services, as well as provide liaison between the services and the community. It is not unusual to find individuals or families in need of these services.

The Cold Lake Reserve did not have a Community

Development worker before the author's arrival. As a result, there was some confusion about the work he would actually be doing. Being totally unknown to the community, he had many obstacles to face. It was a challenge, but his approach was to be receptive to suggestions. No pre-planned programs were in mind; observation and initiative were important as he set out to work.

Community Development Efforts on the Reserve

Sports Committee

On the first day of work it was noticeable that for a community of this size, recreation was not available to any great extent. After the first community meeting³, when the worker was speaking to a group of young people, the topic of sports came up. They mentioned the name, Mr. Peter Matchewais, several times. He would be a good organizer, they said, and he did become involved in some programs. He was an enthusiastic and respectable member of the community.

The author was an informal chairman at the above-mentioned meeting. It was agreed that a formal meeting should be called for the following Sunday afternoon. Posters were made and posted in several places. Thirty-two young people gathered at the Reserve hall that Sunday to discuss the formation of a sports club for members of the Reserve. After some interchange of ideas,

Moses Janvier was elected as president, Mrs. Melanie Matchatis as secretary-treasurer, and Amable Scanie was chosen to be coach for the baseball team.

The club presented a petition for a grant to the newly-elected Chief and councillors and received five hundred dollars. The club also discussed ways to raise money. *"I will bead things for sale,"* one girl said. *"I will sell pop on Sundays. There is a five cent profit per can,"* said another. *"I will go fishing and sell the fish. People will pay a dollar a fish,"* said a young man. Plans were made to buy sports equipment and this was done. A confection booth was set up on the sports grounds since the closest store was several miles away. A soccer and football field and a baseball diamond were made. Several young folk came daily to work on preparations for the Sunday sports. Their ideas, their jokes and enthusiasm gave the Community Development worker much support to continue his work on the Reserve.

Construction of a Sign

A small project was the construction of a sign at the entrance to the Reserve. At one of the meetings, the author made the suggestion that an attractive sign would be nice to have at the junction of Highway 28 and the Reserve road. The group approved the idea and four people volunteered their services to construct it. They were: Edward Janvier, Clarence Scanie, Frank Minoose,

and Ernie Janvier; all four young men were enthusiastic workers.

The Chief provided the plywood, the boys and the worker cut the spruce, bought the paints and started the project. One night all four boys worked on the sign until two in the morning. When the Community Development worker arrived at nine o'clock next morning, three of them were sleeping on the tables in the hall because "it was too late to go home".

Edward Janvier was very good at drawing and painting and was in charge of the design. It was the consensus of the five that a mounted Indian in his typical costume and overlooking a village of teepees would be the best to use. There would also be the words, *"Welcome to the Cold Lake Indian Reserve"*.

There were some comments against the sign but, in general, most of the people liked it. A worker for the Department of Indian Affairs said it was a good idea and all the reserves should do the same. A worker from the Indian Association of Alberta said: *"That's a damn good project!"* There was a feeling of satisfaction for the ones who participated.

Water Pumps Project

While visiting and working, the author became aware of the Reserve's inadequate water supply. Some households had wells, but some of the people had to buy

their water in the town of Cold Lake. The author started to inquire if it were possible to install pumps. In order to buy these pumps, an attempt was made to get personal loans from the Department of Indian Affairs. According to each particular cost, that loan was then to be paid for in amounts of fifteen dollars per month.

A petition was presented to the Supervisor of Indian Affairs in St. Paul, Mr. Boultee. He said that there was not enough money for such a project at that time, but he promised to send someone to look at the most needy cases. Perhaps the next year in a new budget they would give more attention to this matter. He also said that he appreciated hearing of this because now he knew of a specific problem.

Films

The Extension Department of the University of Alberta was very co-operative in another small project which was undertaken. The author was permitted to use a sixteen millimeter film projector at the Reserve, and every Sunday evening two or three educational films were shown at the Reserve hall. There was an attendance of from thirty to one hundred people at these showings; this proved to be a great educational media. Some of the films shown were about agriculture, cattle raising, overseas nations, city life, flora and fauna of Canada and so on.

Cemetary Clean-up

On July 9th there was a funeral for an eleven-year-old boy who had been accidentally shot by another boy of the same age as they played with a gun. Many people were at the funeral. While at the cemetary, the Community Development worker noticed the condition of the grounds; the fence was down, the grass was overgrown. To identify the graves, one had to push the weeds aside, even some of the cross markers were broken. After the funeral, the priest called a parish meeting as he was leaving for five weeks. The worker was invited by one of the people. Once the church business was concluded he had the opportunity to speak. He referred to the sad moments that affect the community from time to time, then spoke about the condition of the cemetary and how one could show one's appreciation for those who had passed away. Finally he asked for volunteers to fix and clean the cemetary. Almost all those present, men, women, and children, volunteered.

The worker was unable to be with them for a few days for health reasons. However, they did the work and when he returned he was informed of the progress of the work at the cemebary. The first day fifteen people gathered and even more came the second day, until the job was finished. The grass was cut, the fence was repaired, the crosses were repaired and painted, and so on. One of the community members remarked: *"Nobody has been in-*

terested in helping us until now." It was a pleasure for the worker to hear that remark.

Art Class

Edward Janvier, one of the individuals who helped with the sign, had artistic talent. He was thirty-two years old, but, unfortunately, had had tuberculosis in his hip when he was a child, causing him to be lame. He mentioned his desire to take art classes, particularly painting. The author inquired at the Department of Extension and was informed that at the Cold Lake Air Base there was a lady who gave art classes. She suggested Mrs. Lorreta Johnson at Grand Centre. Mrs. Johnson was a dynamic person, talented, and willing to teach. Edward was her first student at Grand Centre. For the following class she had close to eighty applicants and many of these were from the Reserve. The first classes began in the Anglican Church basement in Grand Centre. They received a grant from the Federal Government. With that they obtained more supplies and the classes continued. Good art work was exhibited by those attending classes. Today⁴ this is a successful operation, thanks to the combined efforts of community members.

Sport Days

The Reserve selected two days during which several kinds of sports were to be played. Other commu-

nities were invited to attend and participate. Certain preparations had to be made--the grounds had to be fixed, new wire had to be put up for baseball backstops, fences had to be put around the race track, a toilet had to be built, and a total clean-up of the grounds and the hall had to be made.

Preparations were a joint effort of the sports committee and the Band Council. Everyone took part and later enjoyed the activities. There were people from Cold Lake, Grand Centre and Frog Lake. There were ball games, a gymkhana, races for the children and the older people, and trophies for some. To terminate the two days of activities a pow wow was held the evening of the second day. Sports days concluded with no serious injuries and all present had greatly enjoyed themselves.

It is worthy to mention a couple, Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Matchevais, who took the initiative in this project and who were dedicated to the idea of working for the benefit of the community. They provided their vehicles, time and money for the sports days. They were active from the planning stages to the end of the festivities. Other families, as well as single members, participated with enthusiasm for the benefit of the community also.

First Aid Classes

It is the author's belief that every individual should have a general knowledge of first aid, for in some

cases, even death can be prevented particularly in the case of accident. The St. John's Ambulance Society has a branch at the Cold Lake Air Base and this organization is well known for the services they provide.

One Sunday evening after a bingo game, the worker spoke to the Chief and gave him some information about the first aid course. The fee for the course was six dollars so an application was submitted to the Indian Affairs Branch for help. They granted five dollars per person, each person having to pay the additional dollar himself. It was suggested that the ladies be given the opportunity to take the course.

The worker went from house to house explaining the course and collecting names of persons interested in taking it. Everything was arranged and the course was given at the Reserve hall with twenty-two ladies in attendance. Here again a significant response from the community was shown.

Modernization and Culture

The results of these projects are an indication of positive development in the community, without hesitation on their part that their culture may change. This community is receptive to new ideas and new concepts; it has accepted that the community has changed and that this change is inevitable. The younger generation are struggling along the "new road"; they want to survive

in the modern world. The elderly people yearn for the "good old days" although they see that changes have to come. In a conversation with one of the older people, he spoke of treaty days and other social gatherings in the community during the past. He said, pointing towards the empty grounds west of the hall:

Most of the grounds used to be covered with teepees, tents and wagons but today there is not even one teepee. We live like white men, we travel faster now, we use cars like they do. It's not necessary to come and stay overnight.

The social, cultural, and economic way of the Chipewyan people has been described. Their encounter with Europeans was the beginning of a deviation from their traditional way of life. Most of the indigenous aspects of the Chipewyan community had to change to adapt to the white man's ways. It is fair to note here that every society is in a continuous process of modification, no society is static, no society has an entirely independent culture. If we take as an example the American culture, Professor Linton demonstrates elements of that society which have been influenced by other societies:

Our solid American citizen awakens in a bed built on a pattern which originated in the Near East but which was modified in Northern Europe before it was transmitted to America. He throws back the covers made from cotton, domesticated in India, or linen, domesticated in the Near East, or wool from the sheep, also domesticated in the Near East, or silk, the use of which was discovered in China. All of these materials have been spun and woven by processes invented in the Near East. He slips into his moccasins, invented by the Indians of the

*Eastern woodlands, and goes to the bathroom, whose fixtures are a mixture of European and American inventions, both of recent date. He takes off his pajamas, a garment invented in India, and washes with soap invented by the ancient Gauls. He then shaves, a masochistic rite which seems to have been derived from either Sumer or ancient Egypt*⁵

(The complete quotation is given in Appendix A.)

This is a perfect example of cultural adaptation. There is no reason to claim a totally distinct cultural identity, rather we live in a culturally diverse setting where we retain or imitate parts of other cultures which are useful to us. There is an amount of syncretism in each culture. Since this is a natural phenomenon, there should be no difficulty in adopting some items from other cultures without fear of losing any of our own. This process can be called modernization. "'Modern' means dynamic, concerned with people, democratic and equalitarian, scientific, economically advanced, sovereign and influential."⁶ This is the Eisenstadt interpretation. According to Halpern:

*Modernization demands of all systems of society the capacity which the scientific community already possesses: the ability to persist continuously in the enterprise of responding to the challenge of new questions, new facts, and inadequate solutions by developing, maintain, modifying, and disintegrating systems of theory*⁷

To bring back to the community of Cold Lake the feeling of optimism, the desire to live, to work with positive results, to be free in this part of the world, a revolution is necessary--a revolution of modernization. This involves transformation of all systems: political, social econo-

mic, intellectual, religious, and psychological.

The present condition of the community beseeches with silent clamor this revolution. This revolution is also conditional; it has to come from the grass roots of the community and be directed by the elites of their community. They have to support their leaders who are looking for development and change of their standard of living. The first step for development is to recognize the need for it. The time has come when the tears for the past must be dried; the present is real and the future will be real. How can people destroy the problem before the problem destroys the people? The answer is found in the words of a man who said:

We will equip him (the Indian) to survive in the world of today. We will equip him well with all the tools for surviving in the world of today. They will be sharp and useful. We will improve and have these weapons for our survival and our stature as a people We look to the dominant society for our food, clothing and shelter. We must know the ways, the habits of the dominant society, in the same manner which we learned the moose. We must think like them, we must be like them, in order to survive. We must become one, but like the moose and the man we have our own identity as man, and as man we are proud of who we are But, not only will our warriors be dedicated to the survival of our people, but they will also be dedicated to teaching the immigrant culture the love the Indian feels for his land. We will teach the immigrant culture to love the animals, the fish, the birds The future achievements of our people will be even greater than the past.⁸

New life is expected for the Cold Lake community and other communities alike. It will be like a resur-

rection! *"With development in our community they would not see the boundaries of the Reserve,"* said one of the informants. *"Hope, joy and good work are essential to see what we want to see in this community."*

Evaluation

The results of these short-term projects are significant. They show that an Indian community responds positively to suggestions from an outsider, providing that they make sense, and also that natives are open to discussion on the philosophies of the "outside" world. They show that natives have initiative and that they appreciate aid that is offered without prejudice. They show that they can work and work hard without any material reward; the self-satisfaction of doing something that they like to do is beneficial to the community. They show that the apathy of which they have been unjustifiably accused is due to the lack of programs to interest them, the lack of their involvement in projects in the community. The natives show that they are Canadians, concerned about their past, their present and their future. These results also show that *Community Development* is part of the answer; that the philosophy of community involvement is a secret of the success of any project. *The approach must not be one of preaching or demanding, but of suggesting and informing; not of talking, but of listening; not of commanding, but of participating in the work, of "rolling up your sleeves and*

getting your hands dirty" if it is necessary, and thus completing a project.

The role of the Community Development worker requires much strength and a real interest in development. He must be able to get on well with people, have an extensive knowledge about the way of life of the community in which he is working; he must have sympathy with their hopes and aspirations and a desire to help them help themselves. *"He must not be afraid of hard work and he must be willing to live and travel as the rest of the community does. He must be able to improvise and have the common touch."*

Footnotes

¹*Community Development in Alberta* (Ottawa: Special Planning Secretariat, Privy Council Office, 1965), p. 2.

²The author is grateful to Dr. C. H. S. Hynam, Interdisciplinary Program of Community Development, University of Alberta, for this term.

³On the first day of work. The main purpose of which was the nomination of Chief and councillors referred to in Chapter

⁴The program expanded considerably after this. Recently the 4th Annual Exhibition was held with both Indians and whites participating.

⁵Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, inc., 1936), pp. 326-327.

⁶S. N. Eisenstadt, *Modernization: Protest and Change* (Toronto: Prentice-Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1966), p. 41.

⁷M. Halpern, "The Rate and Costs of Political Development," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 358 (March, 1965), p. 23, quoted in S. N. Eisenstadt, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

⁸Preamble, mimeographed pamphlet, Alberta Indian Education Centre, pp. 2-3. The complete article is found in Appendix B.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Fur Trade and Its Implications

The discovery of the "New World" instigated new perspectives for the human race. From the time John Cabot discovered Newfoundland and the "triangle trade" was established between Europe, Newfoundland, and the West Indies, a new lifestyle began in this part of the continent. The most important staples in the triangle trade were fish, timber, and fur. The latter was in such great demand in Europe that it gave birth to two of the biggest fur trade companies in the new land, the North West and Hudson Bay Companies. This business fully involved the Indian people because they were the providers of these valuable products. The search for furs resulted in further exploration of the Canadian territory. The Indian people had the best method of transportation, the most economical and nutritious food, and mastery of trapping, but they also had a desire for more European goods. This was the origin of trade.

The Chipewyan tribe was not involved in fur trading on a large scale, but they were affected by it.

Contact with the white man made them question their own value system, caused changes in their traditional way of life, and perhaps made them feel ashamed of their beliefs.

The Cold Lake Reserve

This Reserve is a product of nearly a century of transition, which can be seen as one of confusion rather than assimilation. It appears that in material goods, if they are available, there is rapid adaptation to the white man's way of life, but emotionally the majority of them believe in total segregation.

The Cold Lake Reserve is one of the best in north-eastern Alberta. However, underdevelopment is apparent. Dissatisfaction with the present standards in the community is real. The desire for development is present. The co-operation in development programs as experienced by the author was significant.

Community Development Recommendation

A series of small projects were developed on the Reserve. The results of these projects are a clear indication that a good attitude towards development exists. They show that community members are receptive to modification and betterment. The physical resources available at the Reserve, particularly grain farming and cattle

raising, can be developed to the point of self-sufficiency. The human resources are the most valuable, although the community needs adequate schooling and vocational training.

The Department of Indian Affairs is doing its part. However, the community has to become economically independent. This can only be done if the community undertakes programs in a collective manner. Since this community is located on agricultural land, the Reserve economy must be stimulated in order to develop. Thus co-operative farming and ranching must be emphasized. With a careful study of the land and facilities, making good use of social scientists and technical specialists, the desired development can be reached. Facilities for more inputs in agricultural development and also in business development must be increased.

"Outside" businesses and industries should be encouraged to develop on the Reserve. This will reduce the notion that "reservations are for Indians" and would facilitate social interaction.

An urgent and careful study of the provision of water must be made.

There should be more opportunities for credit for Reserve members to enable them to invest more.

A way to facilitate interchange of non-reserve land for reserve land must be found permitting a two-way integration.

The housing program should be continued and encouraged.

Grants for recreational projects should be increased.

A public transportation service to and from nearby towns should be started.

The creation of a newspaper would increase communication on the Reserve and between other communities.

There should be opportunity for more and more permanent jobs.

A program to supply family planning information should be established.

The kindergarten program should be expanded and the use of teachers and teachers' aides from the Reserve should be facilitated. Teacher integration on the Reserve and in other schools could be tried.

Encouragement should be given for integrated schooling and an integrated group of Reserve people should act as student counsellors.

Use of frequent field trips and excursions would enrich the view of the world outside the community.

Training programs would help people in the transition from the Reserve communities to non-Indian communities and vice versa.

The incorporation of reserves into school districts and counties would permit the parents to be elected as members of school boards.

The number of trained social workers and welfare workers to look after child placement and foster care should be increased.

Adult education and technical programs should be established.

A Community Development worker should be placed in this community.

These recommendations, among others that can be suggested, will ensure the development of the Cold Lake Community. It is not easy and it is not magic. Development will come only if the job is done and done well. This community deserves the best attention.

Canada has the difficult task of restoring and maintaining harmony between Indians and non-Indians. Problems of culture, philosophy of life, and land rights are now of national concern. The country faces the task of utilizing natural resources and human understanding to solve this internal problem. It is the author's belief that the principles of Community Development contain some of the techniques for physical, economic, and social development. With community participation, the Cold Lake Reserve can reach and maintain a desired level in all aspects of human life. However, the Indian people, themselves, must be allowed to set their developmental goals, based on their values, old and new. Then they must be allowed to work at producing their visions. They can do it.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Our solid American citizen awakens in a bed built on a pattern which originated in the Near East but which was modified in Northern Europe before it was transmitted to America. He throws back the covers, made from cotton, domesticated in India, or linen, domesticated in the Near East, or wool from sheep, also domesticated in the Near East, or silk, the use of which was discovered in China. All of these materials have been spun and woven by processes invented in the Near East. He slips into his moccasins, invented by the Indians of the Eastern woodlands, and goes to the bathroom, whose fixtures are a mixture of European and American inventions, both of recent date. He takes off his pajamas, a garment invented in India, and washes with soap invented by the ancient Gauls. He then shaves, a masochistic rite which seems to have been derived from either Sumer or ancient Egypt.

Returning to the bedroom, he removes his clothes from a chair of southern European type and proceeds to dress. He puts on garments whose form originally derived from the skin clothing of the nomads of the Asiatic steppes, puts on shoes made from skins tanned by a process invented in ancient Egypt, and cut to a pattern derived from the classical civilizations of the Mediterra-

nean, and ties around his neck a strip of bright-colored cloth which is a vestigial survival of the shoulder shawls worn by seventeenth-century Croatians. Before going out for breakfast he glances through the window, made of glass invented in Egypt, and if it is raining, puts on overshoes made of rubber discovered by the Central American Indians and takes an umbrella, invented in southeastern Asia. Upon his head he puts a hat made of felt, a material invented in the Asiatic steppes.

On his way to breakfast he stops to buy a paper, paying for it with coins, an ancient Lydian invention. At the restaurant a whole new series of borrowed elements confronts him. His plate is made of a form of pottery invented in China. His knife is of steel, an alloy first made in southern India, his fork, a medieval Italian invention, and his spoon, a derivative of a Roman original. He begins breakfast with an orange, from the eastern Mediterranean, a cantaloupe from Persia, or perhaps a piece of African watermelon. With this he has coffee, an Abyssinian plant, with cream and sugar. Both the domestication of cows and the idea of milking them originated in the Near East, while sugar was first made in India. After his fruit and first coffee he goes on to waffles, cakes made by a Scandinavian technique from wheat domesticated in Asia Minor. Over these he pours maple syrup, invented by the Indians of the Eastern woodlands. As a side dish he may have the eggs of a species of bird domesticated in

Indo-China, or thin strips of the flesh of an animal domesticated in Eastern Asia, which have been salted and smoked by a process developed in northern Europe.

When our friend has finished eating, he settles back to smoke, an American Indian habit, consuming a plant domesticated in Brazil in either a pipe, derived from the Indians of Virginia, or a cigarette, derived from Mexico. If he is hardy enough he may even attempt a cigar, transmitted to us from the Antilles by way of Spain. While smoking he reads the news of the day, imprinted in characters invented in Germany. As he absorbs the accounts of foreign troubles he will, if he is a good conservative citizen, thank a Hebrew deity in an Indo-European language that he is 100 per cent American.

APPENDIX B

PREAMBLE

Alberta Indian Education Centre

We, the people of this land, from the scattered areas of this province will send our chiefs to virgin land, where we will gather together and sit in deep meditation. We will weep for the lost herds of buffalo. We will weep for the destruction of the animals, the birds and the fish. We will weep for the destruction of the earth, the land which was ours. We will weep for the poisoning of the air which we breathe. We will weep for the poisoning of the waters which we drink. We will weep for the destruction of our spirit and our pride and we will contemplate those people who have controlled our destiny and the destiny of our lifegivers for the past few hundred years. We will weep for the destruction of life and the lifegiver, for we are life and when our lifegivers--our environment--is destroyed, we too are destroyed.

We will give thanks that we have survived, and we will look into each others eyes and feel the oneness of our people and the oneness of our spirit and we will reflect our heritage. We will stand on the land and feel

the roots which reach out from our feet and we will feel the winds across our brow. We will recall our rooted past and will turn to our forefathers and we will look inward to ourselves. Again, we will feel the true meaning of the land. Again, we will feel the true meaning of the animals, the fish, the birds. Again, we will feel the true meaning of the air, which we breathe, and we will feel reborn.

We will join together in ceremony around the offering pole and look up to the Great Spirit and relive the ceremonies that grew from our association and love of our land. With the help of our medicine men, we will raise our spirits, for we are burdened with a heavy task. When we feel the oneness of our total environment, of our brethren and ourselves, we will gather together in council. We, the bands in Alberta, will gather in council around a ceremonial fire. Where there were many bands, there will be eight tongues, but the eight tongues will learn to speak as one tongue, one voice--and here, we ourselves, will determine the destiny of our own people. We will call together, from each band, men to be trained as warriors in the Indian way. We will teach them how we have survived for thousands of years on this land. We will teach them the true meaning of being a warrior in spirit. We will give him the pride and self-esteem which we hold here in this sacred place, and we will teach him how to use the old weapons of survival. But, we have an even greater

task in the instruction of our warriors. We will have to teach him to survive in the world of today. We will equip him well with all of the tools for surviving in the world of today. They will not be dull weapons, they will be sharp and useful. We will improve and have these weapons, for our survival and our stature as a people.

The buffalo and the moose have given us food, clothing and shelter in the past. The buffalo is gone, the moose is going. We look to the dominant society for our food, clothing and shelter. When we hunted the moose, we knew the moose. We thought like a moose, indeed, we were the moose. The hunter and the hunted were one. But though we were one, as all life is one, we were still apart--we were men and we respected the moose as a life-giver of food, clothing and shelter. Now, because of the immigrant culture, our way of life has changed. We look to the dominant society for our food, clothing and shelter. We must know the ways and the habits of the dominant society, in the same manner which we learned the moose. We must think like them, we must be them, in order to survive. We must become one, but like the moose and the man we have our own identity as men, and as men we are proud of who we are. The same respect we hold for the moose we will hold for the dominant society for they are our new lifegivers, we cannot deny their existence. They are there. But, not only will our warriors be dedicated to the survival of our people, but they will also be dedi-

cated to teaching the immigrant culture the love the Indian feels for this land. We will teach the immigrant culture to love the animals, the fish, the birds. We will teach the immigrant culture to love the land, the earth, which we love. We will teach the immigrant culture to love the air which we all breathe and the winds we feel across our brow. We will teach him to love the clear waters and the mountain streams. We will teach him to love this land as we love this land. Our very survival depends upon this task.

When we let others destroy our own environment, our own lifegiver--we destroy ourselves. For our own survival, we must teach the immigrant culture to love as we love, for we have been here thousands of years and theirs is but a short time. We have survived great suffering and loss but we are a great people, the true people, of this land and the great suffering and hardships which we have experienced in the last few hundred years and the fact that we have survived will give us great strength, endurance and tolerance, so that we will be an even greater people. The future achievements of our people will be even greater than the past.

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